



# The Marine Advisory Medical Service

## 海事医疗服务

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### **INFORMATION SHHET - EBOLA VIRUS**

We believe there is minimal risk to seafarers given the Ebola virus is spread by direct contact with an infected person. However, we would issue this advice for P & I Clubs who have concerns.

Because the natural reservoir of ebolaviruses has not yet been proven, the manner in which the virus first appears in a human at the start of an outbreak is unknown. However, researchers have hypothesized that the first patient becomes infected through contact with an infected animal.

When an infection does occur in humans, there are several ways in which the virus can be transmitted to others. These include:

- direct contact with the blood or secretions of an infected person

- exposure to objects (such as needles) that have been contaminated with infected secretions

The viruses that cause Ebola HF are often spread through families and friends because they come in close contact with infectious secretions when caring for ill persons.

During outbreaks of Ebola HF, the disease can spread quickly within health care settings (such as a clinic or hospital). Exposure to ebolaviruses can occur in health care settings where hospital staff are not wearing appropriate protective equipment, such as masks, gowns, and gloves.

Proper cleaning and disposal of instruments, such as needles and syringes, is also important. If instruments are not disposable, they must be sterilized before being used again. Without adequate sterilization of the instruments, virus transmission can continue and amplify an outbreak.

Signs and Symptoms:

#### **Symptoms of Ebola HF typically include:**

- Fever

Headache

Joint and muscle aches

Weakness

Diarrhea

Vomiting

Stomach pain

Lack of appetite

**Some patients may experience:**

A Rash

Red Eyes

Hiccups

Cough

Sore throat

Chest pain

Difficulty breathing

Difficulty swallowing

Bleeding inside and outside of the body

During outbreaks of Ebola HF, those at highest risk include health care workers and the family and friends of an infected individual

**PREVENTION**

The aim of all of these techniques is to avoid contact with the blood or secretions of an infected patient. If a patient with Ebola HF dies, it is equally important that direct contact with the body of the deceased patient be prevented.

Please contact us should you require further information.