



Ebola Fatality Management Planning

Interim Guidance for First Responders and Medical Examiners: Evaluating an Out-of-Hospital Death to Assess for Risk of Possible Ebola Exposure

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There have been no cases of Ebola disease in Oregon, and the likelihood of sustained community transmission of Ebola in Oregon communities in the foreseeable future remains very low. Further, since public health is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, West African cultural communities, and non-governmental organizations that have volunteers working in the affected countries, the vast majority of potentially exposed persons are engaged in monitoring with public health. Should such persons become symptomatic, agencies involved in evaluation and transport will be notified promptly. This means that the risk to first responders (e.g., emergency medical services personnel) of responding to a call and unknowingly evaluating a decedent who subsequently will prove to have Ebola virus disease is small.

Ebola typically causes death several days into the illness, when diarrhea, vomiting, bleeding, and incapacitating loss of intravascular fluid lead to multi-organ failure. In light of this, any friends or family of a person with advanced Ebola disease would probably have alerted public health or sought help through the healthcare system or 911. If the person has no one else living in the household, and died of Ebola infection (again, a very unlikely scenario) that person would very likely have evidence of body fluid loss.

To prevent infection, if a first responder or medical examiner is called to evaluate an out-of-hospital death and observes evidence of emesis, extensive diarrhea, or unexplained bleeding, that person should:

- Refrain from entering the area of contamination.
- Avoid contact with the body before speaking with any friends or family members of the deceased to obtain relevant history about recent travel, course of symptoms, etc.

Since this presentation could reflect risk of infectious disease even in the absence of Ebola, before entering the area or touching the body, the person evaluating the situation should:

- Take appropriate infection control precautions, including use of personal protective equipment as outlined in CDC's *Interim Guidance for Safe Handling of Human Remains in U.S. Hospitals and Mortuaries*, available at <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/guidance-safe-handling-human-remains-ebola-patients-us-hospitals-mortuaries.html>.