



VIRAL HEMORRHAGIC FEVERS (VHFs) FACT SHEET

WHAT ARE VIRAL HEMORRHAGIC FEVERS?

Viral hemorrhagic fevers (VHFs) are a group of illnesses caused by viruses that interfere with blood's ability to clot. While some types of hemorrhagic fever viruses can cause relatively mild illnesses, many of these viruses cause severe, life-threatening disease. Some of the illnesses in this group of illness include; Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever, Ebola Virus Disease, and Lassa Fever. These diseases most commonly occur in tropical areas of the world.

HOW DO YOU GET VIRAL HEMORRHAGIC FEVERS?

How the virus spreads depends on the disease, but typically hemorrhagic fevers are spread by contact with infected animals, people, or insects.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of VHFs vary by disease. In general initial symptoms may include:

- High fever
- Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Muscle, bone, or joint aches
- Weakness

TREATMENT

No current treatment can cure viral hemorrhagic fevers, and immunizations exist for only a few types. Until additional vaccines are developed, the best approach is prevention. Discuss treatment options with your doctor.

PREVENTION

- If you live in, work in or travel to areas where viral hemorrhagic fevers are common, take precautions to protect yourself from infection.
- Wear gloves, eye and face shields, and gowns when contact with blood or body fluids is expected.
- Do your best to avoid mosquitoes and ticks.
- Prevent rodent infestations in your home.

DGHD EFFORTS

Reports of suspected and confirmed cases of disease are made to the Delaware General Health District (DGHD). The DGHD investigates potential sources of illness, conducts surveillance for the spread of disease, and engages in community outreach and education.