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# What is Marburg Virus Disease (MVD)?

Marburg Virus Disease (MVD) is a rare, hemorrhagic fever caused by the Marburg or Ravn viruses that are most commonly found in sub-Saharan Africa. MVD affects people and nonhuman primates, such as monkeys. MVD can cause serious illness and often leads to death.

## Who gets MVD?

MVD is naturally found in a type of bat called the Egyptian rousette bat. People become infected with MVD when they come into close contact with these bats that are often found in mines or caves. People who are sick with MVD can spread the disease to other people. This happens after coming into direct contact with the body fluids of someone with MVD.

People at higher risk of MVD infection include:

- Those who are in contact with people sick with MVD without using proper protection equipment
- Those in contact with Egyptian rousette bats or their excretions
- Those in contact with infected nonhuman primates

## How is MVD spread?

MVD can spread person-to-person when someone comes into contact with the body fluids of a person who is sick with MVD. This includes contact with the sick person's:

- Urine
- Saliva
- Sweat
- Feces
- Vomit
- Breast milk
- Semen

Spread also occurs through contact with objects contaminated with these body fluids, such as medical equipment, needles, clothes, and bedding.

MVD is not spread through the air or by water.

## What are the symptoms of MVD infection?

Symptoms of MVD include:

- Fever
- Severe headache
- Muscle or joint pain
- Chest pain
- Sore throat
- Loss of appetite
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting

- Weakness
- Fatigue
- Rash
- Abdominal (stomach) pain and
- Unexplained bleeding or bruising

As the disease advances, symptoms can become more severe, including liver failure, delirium, shock, bleeding (hemorrhaging), and multi-organ dysfunction.

### **How soon after exposure do symptoms of MVD appear?**

Symptoms of MVD can appear anywhere from 2–21 days after exposure to the virus.

### **How is MVD diagnosed?**

If a person is suspected of having MVD, they should be isolated (separated from other people) immediately and the local health department should be notified. Special laboratory tests will be done to test for MVD.

### **What is the treatment for MVD?**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved specific treatments for MVD. Treatment consists of supportive care, including rest, hydration, and treatment of secondary infections.

Clinical trials are studying the safety and effectiveness of possible MVD treatments.

### **How can MVD infection be prevented?**

If you are traveling or living in a region where MVD is present, there are ways to protect yourself.

- Avoid contact with the blood and body fluids of people who are sick.
- Avoid contact with items that were in contact with an infected person's blood or body fluids.
- Avoid contact with semen from a man who has recovered from MVD. Avoid contact with the semen until testing shows that the virus is gone from his semen.
- Avoid visiting healthcare facilities in areas with an MVD outbreak for non-emergencies. This includes outpatient facilities and traditional healers.
- Avoid funeral or burial practices that involve touching the body of someone who died from MVD or suspect MVD.
- Avoid contact with:
  - Bats
  - Nonhuman primates like monkeys and chimpanzees
- Avoid caves or mines where bats might live.
- Avoid blood, fluids, or raw meat prepared from bats, nonhuman primates and unknown animals.

Some U.S.-based organizations might send staff to areas with MVD outbreaks. Follow [CDC recommendations](#) if you're part of an emergency response to an outbreak region. Following CDC

recommendations ensures your health and that of your family's when you return to the United States.

There is currently no FDA-approved vaccine for MVD. Clinical trials are evaluating the safety and effectiveness of a potential MVD vaccine.

### **How can I get more information about MVD?**

- If you have concerns about MVD, contact a healthcare provider.
- Call your local health department. A directory of local health departments is located at the [VDH Local Health Districts page](#).
- Visit [VDH's Marburg website](#) for more information.
- Visit [CDC's Marburg website](#) for more information.