

FAQ for Call Centers, Contact Centers and Operators

Revised: Oct. 16, 2014 1 p.m.

We understand that there is a great deal of concern regarding the Ebola cases in the Dallas area. Currently there are no Ebola patients in our Baylor Scott & White Health hospitals.

We have been evaluating patients for several weeks per the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. With the recent Ebola cases in the Dallas area, we have enhanced our screening efforts at all points of entry. Should we encounter any suspicious case (based on symptoms, travel history or contact history), the patient would be immediately placed in isolation. We are using great caution, with our primary goal being the safety of our patients and our staff.

Because we are committed to taking every precaution to prevent the spread of Ebola, we feel confident in suggesting that any patient who has a scheduled procedure or appointment should follow through with the procedure or appointment. Your safety is of utmost concern to us; you have our word that we will make every effort to provide a safe, healing, healthy environment.

Do you have any Ebola patients?

Currently there are no Ebola patients in our Baylor Scott & White Health hospitals.

What is Baylor Scott & White Health doing to protect patients, visitors and staff from Ebola?

Baylor Scott & White Health hospitals have been screening and evaluating patients for several weeks per the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines.

Because of the recent positive Ebola test result in the Dallas area, Baylor Scott & White Health hospitals and clinics have enhanced screening efforts at all points of entry to our health care system.

We are using caution. If a patient is suspected to be infected with the Ebola virus through given symptoms, travel or contact history, the patient will be placed in isolation immediately.

We understand the modes of transmission and have the appropriate equipment, protocols and procedures in place. In fact, if a patient with a suspected case of Ebola is admitted to a Baylor Scott & White facility, we are exceeding the recommendations of the CDC.

Baylor Scott & White has a team working together to continue to create additional protocols and/or refine protocols and procedures that are already in place to deal effectively with Ebola. Because this is a fluid situation, the group is prepared to respond immediately as the need arises.

Are you screening for Ebola?

Yes, Baylor Scott & White Health hospitals have been screening/evaluating patients for several weeks per the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines.

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We understand the modes of transmission and have the appropriate equipment, protocols and procedures in place. In fact, if a patient with a suspected case of Ebola is admitted to a Baylor Scott & White facility, we are exceeding the recommendations of the CDC, which recommends standard, contact and droplet precautions.

Instead, we have decided to take extra precaution by using airborne precautions instead of droplet precautions, which will require a negative pressure room and the use of N95 masks. Other personal protective equipment (PPE) includes a fluid-impervious gown, face shield / eye protection and gloves. Even further precautions might be used if deemed necessary on an individual case.

Are your facilities equipped to handle Ebola?

Yes, with a strong infection control system in place and staff that is well trained in dealing with highly infectious diseases, our facilities are prepared to manage Ebola along with a variety of other such diseases while keeping our patients and staff safe.

Every Baylor Scott & White Health hospital has the capacity to isolate and care for a patient situation where Ebola is suspected. If a patient with a suspected case of Ebola is admitted to a Baylor Scott & White facility, we are exceeding the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), which recommends standard, contact and droplet precautions.

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Is it safe to go to a Baylor Scott & White hospital now? I have an upcoming visit, appointment, surgery, etc.

Yes, it is safe to enter any Baylor Scott & White facility. At this time, none of our Baylor Scott & White facilities have any connection with Ebola patients. No Ebola patients have entered our facilities. None of our admitted patients have Ebola. No patients seeking treatment are currently suspected of having the Ebola virus.

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What happens if a person is suspected of having Ebola?

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What happens if a person is admitted to your hospital with Ebola?

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What is Ebola?

Ebola is a disease caused by infection with an Ebola virus strain. The virus has a long incubation period of approximately eight to 21 days. Blood samples are tested to confirm diagnosis. In Sept. 2014 a patient at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas became the first confirmed diagnosis in the U.S.

What are the symptoms of Ebola?

Symptoms may include: fever, headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain or unexplained hemorrhage.

How is Ebola transmitted?

Ebola is transmitted through direct contact with the blood or body fluids of an infected person (living or dead). Ebola is not spread through the air or by water.

What does direct contact mean?

Direct contact occurs when body fluids from an infected person touch someone's mouth, nose, eyes or open cut/wound/abrasion.

What are body fluids?

Examples of body fluids are: mucus, saliva, sweat, tears, vomit, urine, feces, semen and breast milk.

Do coughing and sneezing spread Ebola?

If someone with Ebola coughs/sneezes and saliva or mucus come into direct contact with another person's mouth nose or eyes, these fluids may transmit the disease. However, coughing and sneezing are not common symptoms of Ebola. Ebola is not transmitted by particles that remain suspended in the air after a person coughs or sneezes.

Do mosquitos spread Ebola?

Mosquitos and other insects do not transmit Ebola, only humans and other mammals have shown the ability to become infected with Ebola and spread it to other mammals.

Can Ebola live outside the body?

Ebola on dried surfaces (such as a countertop) can survive for several hours, while the Ebola virus in body fluids can survive at room temperature for up to several days. Ebola is killed with disinfectants such as household bleach.

I still have some questions and would like to talk with someone else.

While we understand your concern, there isn't any more information we can share with you at this point. If you would like more information, you can visit these websites:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov

Texas Department of State Health Services: www.dshs.state.tx.us