

INTERNATIONAL

Ebola Outbreak In Africa

1. What disease is spreading through several nations in western Africa?

2. How is the disease spread?

3. What is the source of the outbreak?

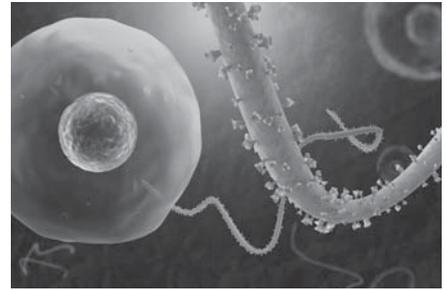
4. How prepared are the health care systems in the countries that have been affected?

5. According to WHO, what is needed to stop the spread of the disease?

CRITICAL THINKING

1. Why do you think the international community has been slow to respond to this health care crisis?

Ebola Outbreak In Africa



A disease is spreading through several nations in western Africa. The disease is Ebola and it has very harmful effects. In its early stages, it causes fever, vomiting, and diarrhea. Later, it can cause internal and external bleeding. About half of the people who get the disease die from it.

The disease is spread by contact with the blood, saliva, or sweat of an infected person. Unlike the flu, it cannot spread through the air. Currently there is no cure or vaccine for Ebola.

The source of the **outbreak** is Guinea, a country located along the western coast of Africa. The first cases occurred in March, and the disease has spread into the neighbouring countries of Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Senegal. As of early September, Nigeria had suffered five cases of Ebola,

and the nation has shut down all schools until October to prevent the spread of the disease.

The outbreak is happening in countries that have been dealing with poverty and civil war in recent years. As a result, the health care systems in these countries are not prepared to handle a major health crisis like this. For example, many of the hospitals don't have enough protective equipment, such as masks and gloves. This has resulted in many doctors and nurses becoming infected by the virus.

Reports say that more than 3,000 people have been infected with the disease, including 240 health care workers. The current outbreak of Ebola is the largest ever reported.

The **World Health Organization** (WHO) says that medical supplies are urgently

needed to stop the spread of the disease. So far, little help has been provided by the international community, except by Doctors Without Borders. WHO says that the United Nations and national governments will need to provide about \$490 million in aid to control the outbreak. ★

DID YOU KNOW?

In Sierra Leone, there is one doctor for every 45,000 people. By contrast, in Canada there is a doctor for every 476 people.

WORD POWER

OUTBREAK: The occurrence of cases of disease above what would normally be expected.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION: The organization within the United Nations that deals with health issues.