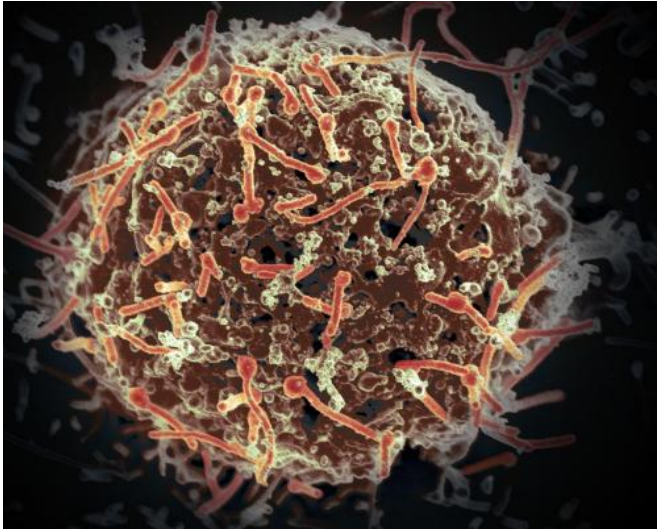


Five new suspected Ebola cases reported in Congo's northwest

10 May 2018, by Saleh Mwanamilongo



The Ebola virus, isolated in November 2014 from patient blood samples obtained in Mali. The virus was isolated on Vero cells in a BSL-4 suite at Rocky Mountain Laboratories. Credit: NIAID

A hospital director said Thursday there are five new suspected cases of Ebola in Congo's northwestern town of Bikoro, where an outbreak of the often deadly hemorrhagic fever was declared this week.

Two nurses who were in contact with patients are among the suspected cases, Bikoro Hospital director Dr. Serge Ngalebato told The Associated Press. Another is a woman from Ikoko Impenge, the epicenter of the outbreak some 30 kilometers (18 miles) from Bikoro, he said.

"We have isolated the patients. We are trying to stabilize all five cases because there are no deaths yet, but all of the sick are presenting signs of fever, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain and intense fatigue," Ngalebato said.

Already two cases of the Zaire strain of Ebola have been confirmed in the region. This is the ninth Ebola outbreak in Congo since 1976, when the deadly disease was first identified.

There is no specific treatment for Ebola, which is spread through the bodily fluids of people exhibiting symptoms. Without preventive measures, the virus can spread quickly between people and is fatal in up to 90 percent of cases.

The director of the National Institute of Biological and Bacterial Research, Dr. Jean Jacques Muyembe, said Wednesday that health experts should be able to quickly contain this outbreak because the area is so remote.

The two Ebola cases were confirmed after officials in the capital, Kinshasa, were alerted early this month to the deaths of 17 people from a [hemorrhagic fever](#) in recent weeks. There are various hemorrhagic fevers including Ebola.

The cases are likely linked to a policeman in the Bikoro health zone who presented symptoms of hemorrhagic [fever](#) and died in December, Muyembe said. His mother and 10 others then showed similar symptoms.

None of the Ebola outbreaks in Congo was connected to the massive [outbreak](#) in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in West Africa that began in 2014 and left more than 11,300 dead.

© 2018 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

APA citation: Five new suspected Ebola cases reported in Congo's northwest (2018, May 10) retrieved 22 May 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-05-ebola-cases-congo-northwest.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.