

Doctor exposed to Ebola treated in US

September 29 2014

An American doctor who was exposed to the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone was admitted Sunday to a clinic of the National Institutes of Health outside Washington.

The patient, whose identity was not revealed, was volunteering as a physician in a unit treating those suffering from the tropical fever that has already killed more than 3,000 people in west Africa since the end of last year..

"Out of an abundance of caution, the patient has been admitted to the NIH Clinical Center's special clinical studies unit that is specifically designed to provide high-level isolation capabilities and is staffed by infectious diseases and critical care specialists," the medical research center said in a statement.

"The unit staff is trained in strict infection control practices optimized to prevent spread of potentially transmissible agents such as Ebola."

It stressed that treating the patient in the United States "presents minimal risk" to other patients, NIH staff and the public.

Two American doctors and a Christian missionary infected by the Ebola virus in Liberia were flown back to the United States to receive treatment and have since recovered.

Global health experts have agreed that blood therapies and convalescent serums can be used to fight Ebola immediately, while safety trials begin

for potential vaccines.

There is no drug or vaccine on the market to treat Ebola.

Ebola is transmitted by close contact with the bodily fluids of an infected person. The virus causes fever, vomiting, diarrhea and sometimes fatal bleeding.

The Ebola epidemic has now infected more than 6,500 people in West Africa and killed nearly half of them, according to the World Health Organization.

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Citation: Doctor exposed to Ebola treated in US (2014, September 29) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-09-doctor-exposed-ebola.html>

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