

1st Ebola patient diagnosed in the US has died

October 8 2014, by Nomaan Merchant



This 2011 photo provided by Wilmot Chayee shows Thomas Eric Duncan, the first Ebola patient diagnosed in the U.S., at a wedding in Ghana. Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas, where Duncan was being treated for the disease, on Wednesday, Oct. 8, 2014 said Duncan has died. (AP Photo/Wilmot Chayee)

The first Ebola patient diagnosed in the United States died Wednesday morning in a Dallas hospital Wednesday, a hospital spokesman said.

Thomas Eric Duncan was pronounced dead at 7:51 a.m. at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas, where he was admitted Sept. 28 and has been kept in isolation, according to spokesman Wendell Watson.

Duncan's condition was changed on Saturday from serious to critical.

Duncan carried the deadly virus with him from his home in Liberia, though he showed no signs when he left for the United States. He arrived in Dallas Sept. 20 and fell sick a few days later.

Others in Dallas still are being monitored as health officials try to contain the virus that has ravaged West Africa, with more than 3,400 people reported dead. They also trying to tamp down anxiety among residents frightened of contracting Ebola, though the disease can be spread only through direct contact with the bodily fluids of an already sick person.

Health officials have identified 10 people, including seven health workers, who had direct contact with Duncan while he was contagious. Another 38 people also may have come into contact with him.

The four people living in the northeast Dallas apartment where Duncan stayed have been isolated in a private residence.

Everyone who potentially had contact with Duncan will be monitored for 21 days, the normal incubation period for the disease.

Duncan passed an airport health screening in Liberia, where doctors took his temperature and found no other signs of Ebola symptoms. But a few days after he arrived, he began to have a fever, headache and abdominal pain.



Josephus Weeks, left, nephew of Ebola patient Thomas Eric Duncan, stands next to the Rev. Jesse Jackson as he finishes up speaking to reporters Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2014, in Dallas. Duncan's family has gathered in Dallas to check on his condition. (AP Photo/LM Otero)

He went to the emergency room of Texas Health Presbyterian in Dallas on Sept. 24, but was sent home. By Sept. 27, his condition had worsened. An ambulance that day took him back to the hospital, where he stayed in isolation.

The hospital has changed its explanation several times about when Duncan arrived and what he said about his travel history. It has acknowledged that Duncan told them on his first visit that he came from West Africa.

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