

Ebola may be deadlier and more widespread than we think

November 4 2014

The current Ebola outbreak in West Africa has grown exponentially since May, indicating inadequate global response. A new analysis indicates that the outbreak's fatality rate is over 70%—rather than 50% as previously claimed by the World Health Organization—and that the total number of affected individuals could exceed 1 million by early next year.

As long as the number of infected people rises exponentially, the likelihood of exporting Ebola to other countries does as well.

"The disease itself hasn't changed, with essentially the same [fatality rate](#) and transmissibility as ever. What is different is the number of sickened individuals," said Dr. Allen Hunt, author of the *Complexity* paper. "If trends continue a few more months, the global community could be forced into a terrible ethical dilemma—either risking the escape of Ebola to other poor, war-torn countries, or sealing off borders to countries in West Africa, with unimaginable humanitarian consequences."

More information: Hunt, A. G. (2014), Exponential growth in Ebola outbreak since May 14, 2014. *Complexity*, 20: 8–11. [DOI: 10.1002/cplx.21615](#)

Provided by Wiley

Citation: Ebola may be deadlier and more widespread than we think (2014, November 4)
retrieved 5 May 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-11-ebola-deadlier-widespread.html>

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