

Nebraska hospital: Surgeon with Ebola has died

November 17 2014, by Nelson Lampe



Health workers in protective suits transport Dr. Martin Salia, a surgeon working in Sierra Leone who had been diagnosed with Ebola, from a jet that brought him from Sierra Leone to a waiting ambulance that will take him to the Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, Neb., Saturday, Nov. 15, 2014. Dr. Salia is the third Ebola patient at the Omaha hospital and the 10th person with Ebola to be treated in the U.S. (AP Photo/Nati Harnik)

A surgeon who contracted Ebola while working in his native Sierra Leone died Monday while being treated in a biocontainment unit at a Nebraska hospital, the facility said.

Nebraska Medical Center said in a news release that Dr. Martin Salia died as a result of the disease. Hospital spokesman Taylor Wilson said Salia died shortly after 4 a.m. Monday.

"Dr. Salia was extremely critical when he arrived here, and unfortunately, despite our best efforts, we weren't able to save him," said Dr. Phil Smith, medical director of the biocontainment unit.

Salia arrived Saturday to be treated at the Omaha [hospital](#), where two other Ebola patients have been successfully treated.

Salia had advanced symptoms when he arrived at the hospital Saturday, which included kidney and respiratory failure, the hospital said. He was placed on dialysis, a ventilator and given several medications to support his organ systems.

"We used every possible treatment available to give Dr. Salia every possible opportunity for survival," Smith said. "As we have learned, early treatment with these patients is essential. In Dr. Salia's case, his disease was already extremely advanced by the time he came here for treatment."

Ebola has killed more than 5,000 people in West Africa, mostly in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. Five other doctors in Sierra Leone have contracted Ebola, and all have died.

The 44-year-old Salia had been working as a general surgeon at Kissy United Methodist Hospital in the Sierra Leone capital of Freetown. It's not clear whether he was involved in the care of Ebola patients. Kissy is

not an Ebola treatment unit, but Salia worked in at least three other facilities, United Methodist News said, citing health ministry sources.



Health workers in protective suits transport Dr. Martin Salia, a surgeon working in Sierra Leone who had been diagnosed with Ebola, from a jet that brought him from Sierra Leone to a waiting ambulance that will take him to the Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, Neb., Saturday, Nov. 15, 2014. Dr. Salia is the third Ebola patient at the Omaha hospital and the 10th person with Ebola to be treated in the U.S. (AP Photo/Nati Harnik)

Salia, a Sierra Leone citizen who lives in Maryland, first showed Ebola symptoms on Nov. 6 but tested negative for the virus. He eventually tested positive on Nov. 10.

Salia's wife, Isatu Salia, said in a telephone interview at the weekend that when she spoke to her husband early Friday his voice sounded weak and

shaky. But he told her "I love you" in a steady voice, she said.

The two prayed together, and their children, ages 12 and 20, are coping, Isatu Salia said, calling her husband "my everything."



This 2013 file photo provided by United Brethren in Christ, shows Dr. Martin Salia. Salia who was diagnosed with Ebola on Monday, landed at Eppley Airfield in Omaha, Neb., Saturday, Nov. 17, 2014, and was being transported to the Nebraska Medical Center. (AP Photo/United Brethren in Christ, Jeff Bleijerveld, File)

© 2014 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: Nebraska hospital: Surgeon with Ebola has died (2014, November 17) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-11-nebraska-hospital-surgeon-ebola-died.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.