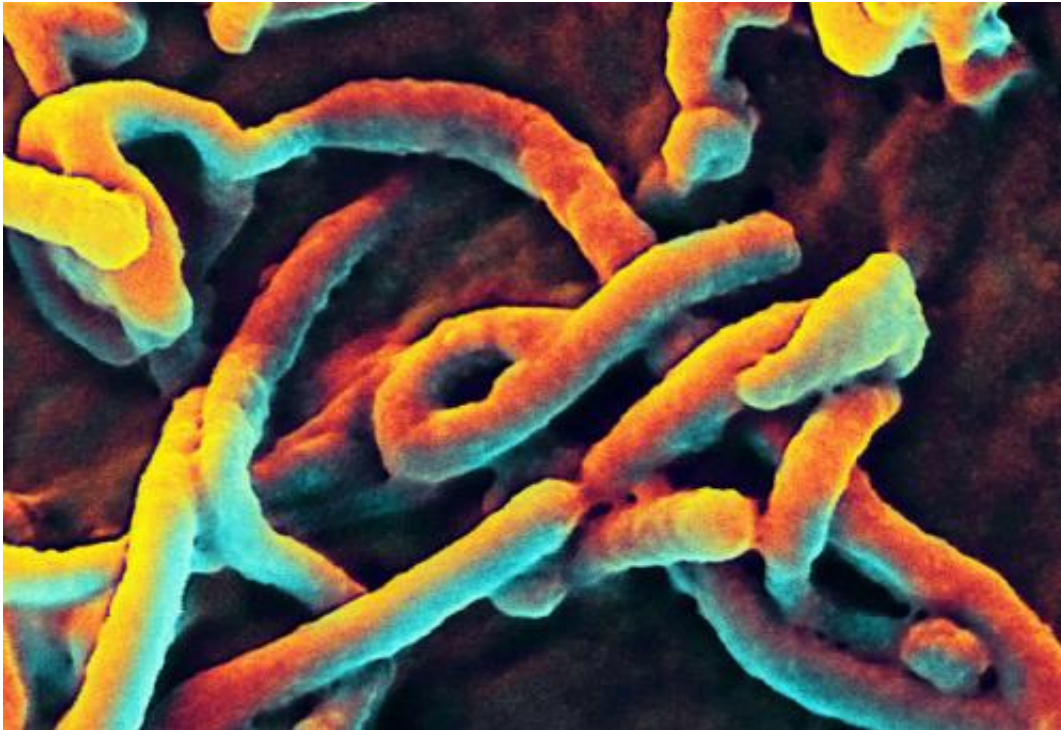


Sperm can carry Ebola for 82 days: WHO

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A scanning electron micrograph of Ebola virus budding from a cell (African green monkey kidney epithelial cell line). Credit: NIAID

Sperm can carry the Ebola virus for at least 82 days, the World Health Organization said Friday, urging men recovering from the disease to use condoms for three months after the onset of symptoms.

"Because of the potential to transmit the virus sexually during this time, they should maintain good personal hygiene after masturbation, and either abstain from sex (including [oral sex](#)) for three months after onset

of [symptoms](#), or use condoms if abstinence is not possible," the WHO said in a statement.

In four studies, on a total of 43 patients, three men who had recovered from Ebola still had the live virus in their semen 40 days, 61 days and 82 days respectively after the onset of symptoms.

The WHO said that no case of sexual transmission of Ebola had been documented, and that it was unclear whether semen that tests positive for Ebola is actually infectious.

The four studies were carried out in different countries, with the first dating back more than 30 years.

Ebola is highly contagious but, even if a person is infected, the virus can only be passed on once symptoms appear and only through direct contact with their bodily fluids.

Symptoms of Ebola include fever, headache, diarrhea, vomiting and in some cases bleeding.

The biggest Ebola epidemic on record has claimed around 5,700 lives since the beginning of the year, according to the WHO—almost all of them in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

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