

West African nation of Guinea reports Lassa fever death

February 8 2018

Health authorities in the West African nation of Guinea are reporting the country's first death from Lassa fever in nearly a quarter-century.

The emergence of the hemorrhagic virus has created anxiety in Guinea, where the world's worst Ebola epidemic began in late 2013 and claimed more than 11,000 lives.

The victim's death was reported Thursday, though the government statement says its citizen died in neighboring Liberia on Jan. 11. The government says it has been monitoring 28 contacts of the victim in Guinea.

Like Ebola, Lassa fever can be spread through contact with the bodily fluids of sick people. Humans also can contract it from rodents.

While Lassa fever is rare in Guinea, it does exist in West Africa and last year an outbreak was reported in northeastern Nigeria.

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