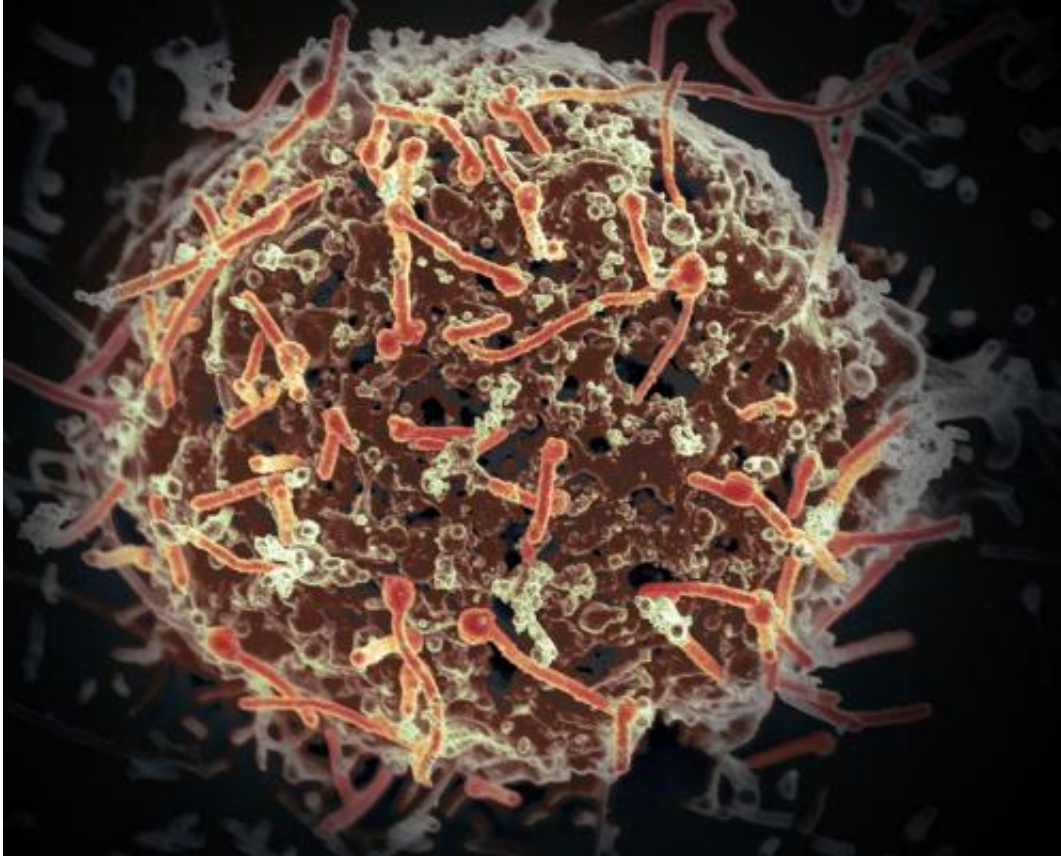


DR Congo Ebola death toll tops 400

January 15 2019



The Ebola virus, isolated in November 2014 from patient blood samples obtained in Mali. The virus was isolated on Vero cells in a BSL-4 suite at Rocky Mountain Laboratories. Credit: NIAID

The death toll from the latest outbreak of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo has passed the 400 mark in the east and northeast, health authorities said Tuesday.

"Since the start of the epidemic, the total number of cases is 658—609 confirmed and 49 probable. In total there have been 402 deaths" in the provinces of North Kivu and Ituri, a health ministry bulletin stated.

Health authorities also confirmed 237 cases of "persons cured", with a further "200 suspect cases still under investigation".

The [health ministry](#) noted a "positive trend in the epidemic in Beni," with no new reported cases in the eastern city in a region that is also caught up in violence blamed on Islamist rebels from across the Ugandan border.

"Since the start of vaccinations on August 8, 2018, 60,460 people have been vaccinated, including 19,952 in Beni," according to an official tally.

In December, the United Nations said children accounted for one-third of Ebola cases in DR Congo in this latest outbreak of a highly contagious disease, the 10th since the first in 1976 hit the northwestern province of Equateur.

On that occasion the UN children's agency UNICEF said it and its partners had identified more than 400 children orphaned or isolated by the current outbreak, which began last August, putting fatalities at around 300 at that stage.

In 1995, an outbreak in the western city of Kikwit killed 256 of 315 people sickened, according to World Health Organization figures.

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