

WHO: Ghana reports 2 suspected cases of Marburg virus

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The World Health Organization says Ghana has reported two possible cases of the Ebola-like Marburg virus disease, which if confirmed would mark the first-ever such infections in the West African country.

The disease, a very infectious hemorrhagic fever in the same family as Ebola, is spread to people by [fruit bats](#) and transmitted among people through direct contact with [bodily fluids](#) of infected people and surfaces, WHO said.

Marburg is potentially very harmful and deadly: Case fatality rates in past outbreaks have ranged from 24% to 88%.

WHO says a preliminary analysis of samples taken from two patients from Ghana's southern Ashanti region—both of whom died—turned up positive, but they were forwarded for full confirmation to the Pasteur Institute in Dakar, Senegal, which works with the U.N. health agency.

The two patients had been taken to a local hospital with symptoms including diarrhea, fever, nausea and vomiting, WHO said in a statement.

"Preparations for a possible outbreak response are being set up swiftly as further investigations are underway," WHO said, adding that it is deploying experts to support health authorities in Ghana.

WHO said that if confirmed as Marburg, the cases would mark only the

second time that the disease has been detected in West Africa—after Guinea confirmed a single case detected in August. The outbreak in Guinea was declared over five weeks later.

Previous Marburg outbreaks and individual cases have appeared in Angola, Congo, Kenya, South Africa and Uganda, WHO said.

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