

Ebola death toll in Uganda climbs to nine

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The death toll from an Ebola outbreak in Uganda has risen to nine, the health ministry said Friday, two weeks after the authorities announced an epidemic in the centre of the country.

The new toll rose from seven, the figure given on Friday.

Last month the health ministry announced the landlocked nation's first fatality from the highly contagious virus since 2019, declaring an outbreak in the central district of Mubende.

Ebola is an often-fatal viral haemorrhagic fever named after a river in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) where it was discovered in 1976.

Human transmission is through [bodily fluids](#), with the main symptoms being fever, vomiting, bleeding and diarrhoea.

Outbreaks are difficult to contain, especially in [urban environments](#).

The [health ministry](#) tweeted on Monday that the total number of Ebola cases identified in the country stood at 43, with nearly 900 contact cases identified.

Last week President Yoweri Museveni ruled out imposing a lockdown to contain the virus, saying that "government has capacity to control this outbreak as we have done before".

People who are infected do not become contagious until symptoms appear, which is after an incubation period of between two and 21 days.

At present there is no licensed medication to prevent or treat Ebola, although a range of experimental drugs are in development.

Uganda, which shares a porous border with the DRC, has experienced several Ebola outbreaks, most recently in 2019 when at least five people died.

Last week the DRC declared an end to an Ebola virus outbreak that

emerged in eastern North Kivu province six weeks ago.

Only one case of the virus had been confirmed, according to the World Health Organization, making the DRC's Ebola outbreak its "least catastrophic".

The worst epidemic in West Africa between 2013 and 2016 killed more than 11,300 alone. The DRC has had more than a dozen epidemics, the deadliest killing 2,280 people in 2020.

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