

Uganda to deploy Ebola vaccine in 2 weeks, says WHO official

October 19 2022, by Rodney Muhumuza



Doctors walk inside the Ebola isolation section of Mubende Regional Referral Hospital, in Mubende, Uganda on Sept. 29, 2022. Experimental Ebola vaccines will be deployed in Uganda in about "two weeks," a World Health Organization official said Wednesday, Oct. 19, 2022 as the country carried out tough preventive measures including a lockdown in Ebola-hit areas. Credit: AP Photo/Hajarah Nalwadda, File

Experimental Ebola vaccines will be deployed in Uganda in about "two weeks," a World Health Organization official said Wednesday, as the East African country carried out tough preventive measures that include a lockdown in the Ebola-hit areas.

Potentially hundreds of thousands of trial [vaccine doses](#) will buttress a response effort that still must focus on tracing Ebola contacts and [community engagement](#), Dr. Yonas Tegegn Woldemariam, the WHO representative in Uganda, told The Associated Press.

"We are getting closer and closer to deploying vaccines," he said. "This is a study. This is just another tool that we are going to try."

Vaccines developed by the U.S.-based Sabin Vaccine Institute and Oxford University "are ready to be shipped" to Uganda, which is finalizing protocols for the study before the National Drug Authority issues import permits, he said.

The Sudan strain of Ebola, for which there's no proven vaccine, is circulating in Uganda. Ebola, which manifests as a [viral hemorrhagic fever](#), has infected at least 60 people and killed 24. The official figures don't include people who likely died of Ebola before the [outbreak](#) was confirmed. Victims include five health workers.

The Oxford vaccine is being produced by the Serum Institute of India, which has indicated it can eventually make hundreds of thousands of doses available, according to Yonas, who is closely following Uganda's Ebola response.



Relatives of a woman who died from Ebola prepare her grave in Kijavuzo village, Mubende district, Uganda on Sept. 29, 2022. Experimental Ebola vaccines will be deployed in Uganda in about "two weeks," a World Health Organization official said Wednesday, Oct. 19, 2022 as the country carried out tough preventive measures including a lockdown in Ebola-hit areas. Credit: AP Photo/Hajarah Nalwadda, File

Uganda declared an outbreak of Ebola on Sept. 20, several days after the contagious disease began spreading in a rural farming community. A lockdown and nighttime curfew measures are now in place in the outbreak's epicenter, about 150 kilometers (90 miles) west of the capital, Kampala.

Ebola is spread by contact with bodily fluids of an infected person or

contaminated materials. Symptoms include fever, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle pain and at times internal and external bleeding.

Scientists don't know the natural reservoir of the virus, but they suspect the first victim in an Ebola outbreak gets infected through contact with an infected animal or eating its raw meat. Ugandan officials are still investigating the source of the current outbreak.

Uganda has had multiple Ebola outbreaks, including one in 2000 that killed more than 200 people. The 2014-16 Ebola outbreak in West Africa killed more than 11,000 people, the disease's largest death toll ever.

Ebola was discovered in 1976 in two simultaneous outbreaks in South Sudan and Congo, where it occurred in a village near the Ebola River after which the disease is named.

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