

WHO: More Ebola cases in past week than any other

August 29 2014



A man that was hired by the community sprays chemicals to try and prevent the spread of the Ebola virus is seen in Monrovia, Liberia, Friday, Aug. 29, 2014. The Ebola outbreak in West Africa eventually could exceed 20,000 cases, more than six times as many as are now known, the World Health Organization said Thursday. A new plan released by the U.N. health agency to stop Ebola also assumes that the actual number of cases in many hard-hit areas may be two to four times higher than currently reported.(AP Photo/Abbas Dulleh)

The past week has seen the highest increase of Ebola cases since the outbreak in West Africa began, the World Health Organization said Friday, offering more evidence that the crisis is worsening.

The U.N. health agency warned Thursday that the outbreak in West Africa is accelerating and could eventually infect as many as 20,000 people. So far it has killed more than 1,500 of the 3,000 people it has sickened in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, according to an official count. The U.N. health agency said Thursday it assumes that in many hard-hit areas, the actual number of cases may be two to four times higher than is currently reported.

In a detailed report on the outbreak Friday, the WHO said more than 500 cases were recorded over the past week, by far the worst toll of any week so far. The vast majority of the cases were in Liberia, but the agency said it was also the highest number of cases in one week for Guinea and Sierra Leone. Nigeria has also recorded a small number of cases.

"There are serious problems with case management and infection prevention and control," the report said. "The situation is worsening in Liberia and Sierra Leone."

Neither of those countries has enough space in treatment centers to handle the tremendous and increasing number of cases, it said.



This undated handout photo provided by the journal Science shows Augustine Goba, laboratory director at Kenema Government Hospital in Sierra Leone. On Thursday, officials at the National Institutes of Health announced that they were launching safety trials on a preliminary vaccine for Ebola. Researchers have already checked that still-not-tested vaccine against some of the more than 350 mutations in this strain of Ebola to make sure the changes the disease is making won't undercut science's hurried efforts to fight it, said Pardis Sabeti, a scientist at Harvard University and its affiliated Broad Institute. She and Gire, also at Broad and Harvard, are two of the lead authors of a study published Thursday in the journal Science that maps the killer disease strain based on specimens collected from 78 patients. (AP Photo/Stephen Gire, Science)

The region where the three most affected countries meet remains the epicenter of the [outbreak](#), the WHO said. Nearly two-thirds of all cases have been reported in that area. The agency said that the spread of the virus into densely populated cities is causing concern. Monrovia, Liberia's capital, has been particularly hard hit.



In this photo taken on Wednesday, Aug. 27, 2014, Red Cross workers walk through a section of West Point, an area that has been hit hard by the Ebola virus, with residents not allowed to leave as government forces clamp down on movement to prevent the spread of Ebola, in Monrovia, Liberia. The Ebola outbreak in West Africa eventually could exceed 20,000 cases, more than six times as many as are now known, the World Health Organization said Thursday. A new plan released by the U.N. health agency to stop Ebola also assumes that the actual number of cases in many hard-hit areas may be two to four times higher than currently reported. (AP Photo/Abbas Dulleh)

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