

VDH Updates on Hantavirus and Ebola Outbreaks and Summer Preparedness

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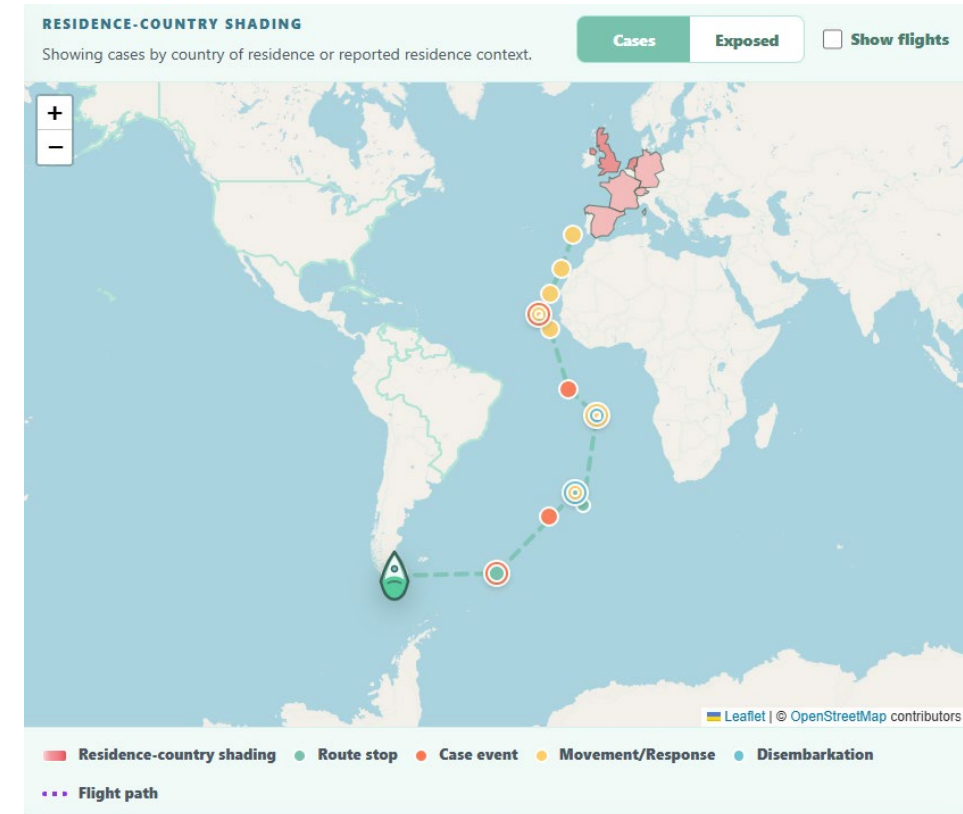
VHEMP Webinar May 20, 2026

Outline

- Update on hantavirus outbreak
 - Basic information about Andes virus
 - What VDH is doing
 - Resources
- Update on Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda
 - Resources
- Preparing for a busy summer
- Questions

Hantavirus Outbreak associated with a Cruise Ship


- On May 2, WHO was notified about severe respiratory illnesses on a cruise ship
 - Andes virus later identified as cause of outbreak
 - As of May 15: WHO reports 10 cases (8 confirmed, 2 probable), including 3 deaths
 - Investigations to find source and describe outbreak
- Before outbreak identified, 7 U.S. citizens returned
- On May 11, another 18 U.S. citizens returned to U.S.
- 41 total people in U.S. are under public health monitoring from the ship or airplane flights
- **Currently no cases in U.S., risk of spread is very low**



[GenomicEpi.com](https://www.genomicpi.com) (May 15, 2026)

Fast Facts: Andes Virus

- Type of hantavirus found in South America
- Spreads to people primarily through contact with long-tailed rice rats, but also touching contaminated objects or close contact
- Only hantavirus known to spread from person to person if there is close contact with ill person
- Symptoms start 4 to 42 days after exposure
- Infection can cause severe respiratory illness; early medical care is critical
- Minimize spread between people by washing hands, avoiding close contact, and maintaining distance



Andes Virus

A hantavirus spread by rodents in South America that can cause a severe respiratory disease in people, called Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS).

How does Andes virus spread?

- Through contact with infected rodents or their urine, saliva, or feces
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching mouth, nose or eyes
- Through close contact with a person who is sick with Andes virus

Is there a treatment?

No. There is no specific antiviral treatment or vaccine currently available. Early medical care is critical and focuses on supportive treatment.

What are the symptoms?

Signs and symptoms of infection appear 4 to 42 days after exposure.

Early symptoms can look like flu and include:

- Headache
- Fever
- Muscle ache/back pain
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Cough
- Chest pain
- Loss of appetite
- Difficulty breathing

Typically, people are only infectious while they have symptoms.

How is it prevented?

Avoid areas infested with rodents while visiting countries in South America.

Avoid spread between people by:

- Washing hands frequently
- Avoiding kissing and sexual contact with someone who may have Andes virus
- Maintaining distance from someone who may have Andes virus

Warning: If you may have had contact with a person with Andes virus and are experiencing symptoms, contact a medical professional immediately.

CDC ATSDR U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND DISEASE REGISTRY

CDC VI | 5/6/2025

Impact on Virginia

- 3 Virginia residents are currently under public health monitoring
 - 1 Virginia resident who returned home before the outbreak was identified
 - 2 Virginia residents who sat on an airplane outside the high-risk area with a symptomatic case-patient
- VDH is prepared to monitor any Virginia resident who returned to the U.S. on May 11 or other potential contacts
 - People have option to stay in National Quarantine Unit in Nebraska for remainder of 42-day monitoring period or, if cleared, return to home via non-commercial travel
 - Federal agencies are planning for safe return home if that is preferred

What VDH is Doing



**Responding to
the situation**



**Conducting
public health
monitoring**



**Coordinating with
healthcare facilities**



**Sharing
information**

How Public Health Monitoring Works in Virginia

- CDC notifies VDH of any Virginia resident with potential exposures and shares any previous risk assessment and clinical information
- Local health department (LHD) staff conduct interview
- LHD staff assess and classify exposure risk
- LHD staff regularly check-in during the 42-day monitoring period to assess health status and reinforce instructions
- If person reports symptoms, LHD staff coordinate with specialized facility prepared to evaluate and care for those with hantavirus

How VDH Manages Potentially Exposed People

- All people under public health monitoring are instructed to:
 - Take their temperature twice daily
 - Self-monitor for symptoms
 - Practice good hand hygiene
 - Ensure good ventilation
 - Wear a well-fitting mask or respirator if indoors with others
 - Maintain distance
- If symptoms develop, they should self-isolate in a space away from others and call LHD immediately

How VDH Manages Potentially Exposed People: High-Risk Contacts

- People who are considered high-risk contacts should
 - Stay home and away from others unless life-threatening emergency or instructed by public health
 - Not enter any buildings, except their residence
 - Not allow other people to enter their residence
 - Not come into contact with other people and avoid crowded settings
- Any essential travel, for example to return individuals to their jurisdiction of residence or to facilitate access to urgent medical care, should be coordinated by authorities

National Special Pathogen System (NSPS)

Level 1

Level 1 facilities, or Regional Emerging Special Pathogen Treatment Centers (RESPTCs), are regional resources hubs which provide highly specialized care. *Level 1s care for patients for their duration of illness.*

Level 2

Level 2 facilities, or Special Pathogen Treatment Centers (SPTCs), have the capacity to deliver specialized care to clusters of patients and serve as primary patient care delivery centers. *Level 2s can care for patients for their duration of illness.*

Level 3

Level 3 facilities, or Assessment Centers, are widely accessible care delivery facilities, able to conduct limited basic laboratory testing, stabilize patients, and coordinate rapid patient transfer. *Level 3s can care for patients for 12-36 hours.*

Level 4

Level 4 facilities, or All Other Healthcare Facilities, can identify, isolate, inform, & initiate stabilizing medical care; protect staff; and arrange timely patient transport to minimize impact to normal facility operations.

Regional Emerging Special Pathogen Treatment Centers (RESPTCs)



- 1** CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT
[Massachusetts General Hospital](#)
- 2** NJ, NY, PR, VI
[NYC Health + Hospitals / Bellevue](#)
- 3** DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV
[Johns Hopkins Hospital](#)
[Medstar Washington Hospital Center / Children's National](#)
- 4** AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN
[Emory University / Children's Healthcare of Atlanta](#)
[University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#)
- 5** IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI
[University of Minnesota Medical Center](#)
[Corewell Health System](#)
- 6** AR, LA, NM, OK, TX
[University of Texas Medical Branch](#)
- 7** IA, KS, MO, NE
[University of Nebraska Medical Center / Nebraska Medicine](#)
- 8** CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY
[Denver Health & Hospital Authority](#)
- 9** AZ, CA, HI, NV, AS, MP, FM, GU, MH, PW
[Cedars-Sinai Medical Center](#)
- 10** AK, ID, OR, WA
[Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center & Children's Hospital](#)

Hantavirus Resources for Everyone

- [Your local health department](#)
- [VDH Hantavirus website](#)
- [CDC Hantavirus: Current Situation](#)
- [CDC Hantavirus Outbreak Toolkit](#)
- [CDC Andes Virus Outbreak on a Cruise Ship: Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Hantavirus Resources for Healthcare Providers

- [Your local health department](#)
- [CDC Health Alert Network \(HAN\) Health Advisory](#)
- [CDC Interim Guidance for Public Health Assessment and Management of People with Potential Exposure to Andes Virus](#)
- [CDC Clinical Overview of Hantavirus](#)
- [Region 3 RESPTC handouts for hospitals and EMS](#)

EMS Clinician Update - May 2026
Andes Hantavirus EMS Health Alert

MedStar Washington Hospital Center | Children's National Hospital | Regional Emerging Special Pathogen

In May 2026, the CDC issued a **HAN** about a cluster of cases of Andes hantavirus among passengers on a cruise ship. Andes hantavirus is a rare but serious disease that can be deadly and is the only known hantavirus with confirmed person-to-person transmission. Clinicians should be mindful of the potential for Andes hantavirus in patients who have had contact with rodents, have recently traveled to South America and/or Antarctica on a cruise ship or have had contact with someone known to have Andes hantavirus.

1. Identify: When to Suspect

Have been aboard M/V Hondius at any time from April 6 or had close contact with a symptomatic case-patient within the 42 days before symptoms onset.

2. Isolate: Protecting Personnel

Patient Isolation

- Place face mask on patient
- Consider wrapping "wet" patients with vomiting and diarrhea (e.g. in impervious drape) to minimize contamination

PPE for Suspe

- Imperviable coverall
- Two pairs of g
- Faceshield or

3. Inform: Notify Receiving Facil

Pre-hospital clinicians should call or radio ahead to receive exposures, do not bring the patient into the ED until appro reporting within your EMS agency.

4. Post-Transport Issue:

Transport units and equipment should disinfectant while wearing PPE. Soiled for special pathogens.



In-Hospital Clinician Update - May 2026
Andes Hantavirus Health Alert

MedStar Washington Hospital Center | Children's National Hospital | Regional Emerging Special Pathogen Treatment Center

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1. Identify: When to Suspect

Have been aboard M/V Hondius at any time from April 6 or had close contact with a symptomatic case-patient within the 42 days before symptoms onset.

2. Isolate: Protecting Personnel and the Public

Patient Isolation

- Place face mask on patient
- Place patient in an AIR when available
- Consider wrapping "wet" patients with vomiting and diarrhea (e.g. in impervious drape) to minimize contamination

PPE for Suspected Cases: Contact + Airborne Precautions

- Imperviable gown (AAMI Level 3 or 4) or coverall
- Two pairs of gloves
- Faceshield or goggles
- Fit-tested N95 or PAPR

3. Inform: Notify Local Department of Health

Clinicians should follow local protocols. Clinicians should contact your infection prevention team and local department of health.

4. Post-Transfer Issues

All exposed rooms and equipment should be cleaned and disinfected using an EPA-registered hospital-grade disinfectant while wearing PPE. Soiled laundry and trash should be handled following your organization's guidelines for special pathogens.

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Chills
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Chest pain
- Abdominal pain
- Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea
- Acute respiratory symptoms



Contact Region 3 Outreach: Lydian Green@medstar.net | Neal.Mangalath@medstar.net | Kaytlin.E.Hack@medstar.net

Additional References: [CDC Clinical Overview](#) | [NETEC](#)



Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak in DRC and Uganda

- In early May, a hospital in Bunia Health Zone in northeastern DRC identified a cluster of severe illnesses affecting healthcare workers
- Bundibugyo (Bun-dee-BOO-joh) virus identified as cause
 - 1 of [4 types of orthoebolaviruses](#) that cause Ebola disease in people
- As of May 19: 536 suspected cases, 105 probable cases, 34 confirmed cases, and 134 deaths
- On May 17, WHO declared a [public health emergency of international concern](#)
- No vaccine for Bundibugyo virus and [treatment](#) is supportive



Bundibugyo virus: VDH Response

- VDH supports response efforts through:
 - Closely monitoring situation and coordinating with federal, state, local partners
 - Conducting symptom monitoring for Virginia travelers who were exposed in DRC or Uganda for duration of incubation period (21 days)
 - Risk communication and sharing information with the public
 - Sharing information, planning and coordinating with healthcare partners, including RESPTCs and NSPS facilities in Virginia
 - Coordinating with laboratory partners to make sure that potentially exposed people can be tested quickly if they become ill

Ebola Informational Resources

General Information

- [CDC Ebola: Current Situation](#)
- [VDH Ebola website](#)
- [VDH Ebola Fact Sheet](#)
- [CDC Ebola Disease Website](#)
- [CDC Ebola Outbreaks](#)

Info for Healthcare Providers

- [VDH Ebola Website for Healthcare Professionals](#)
- [DCLS Ebola and Marburg Testing and Shipping Instructions](#)
- [CDC Clinical Guidance for Ebola Disease](#)

Preparing for a Busy Summer

- **Providers should prepare for potential increases in patient visits, travel-related diseases, measles cases, and outbreaks**
- Virginia has seen a record number of [measles cases](#) in 2026
 - As of May 18, 36 reported cases in 2026 across all 5 health planning regions
 - On May 13, Virginia confirmed [measles outbreak](#) in Buckingham County (Central region)
 - Measles activity is also high in some other [U.S. states](#) and [countries](#)
- VDH expects more international and domestic visitors in Virginia this summer
 - FIFA World Cup 2026™ takes place June 11–July 1
 - Large events in [District of Columbia](#), [Sail250](#) in Norfolk and other Virginia harbors, and 250th anniversary and 4th of July celebrations

Planning Considerations for Providers

- Be alert for travel-related illnesses or possible outbreaks
- Ask patients presenting with acute febrile illness about risk factors in the 21 days before symptom onset, including any travel or attendance at large gatherings
- Consider communicable diseases not typically seen in Virginia
- Review [CDC's Travel Health Notices](#) for latest advisories and [CDC's Yellow Book](#) for travel medicine topics
- Be aware of potential increases in heat-related illnesses, crowd-related injuries, and substance use and overdose events
- Visit [VDH's Measles Information for Healthcare Providers website](#) for the latest information
- Review CDC's [Identify, Isolate, and Inform framework](#) to quickly recognize and manage patients with high-consequence infectious diseases
- Report conditions, outbreaks, or unusual occurrence of disease to your local health department
- Know how to contact your local health department during and outside of business hours

Thank you!

Any questions?