



Environmental cleaning guidance for potential Ebola contamination (excluding healthcare settings) Updated 22 October 2014

Scope

This document outlines guidelines for the environmental cleaning of non-healthcare settings which have been potentially contaminated by cases who are suspected of having Ebola or confirmed to be infected with Ebola. This is an update of the first version which was issued on 12 August 2014. For hospital and community health settings, please refer to guidance from the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/viral-haemorrhagic-fever-algorithm-and-guidance-on-management-of-patients>

Background

The current outbreak of Ebola in West Africa is the largest ever known outbreak of this disease and was declared a public health emergency of international concern by the World Health Organization in August 2014. Ebola is caused by infection with a virus which is spread by direct contact with blood and body fluids from infected people who are symptomatic. It remains unlikely, but not impossible, that travellers infected in affected countries could arrive in the UK while incubating the disease and develop symptoms after their return. People infected with Ebola are infectious only when they have developed symptoms. These include fever, headache, diarrhoea and vomiting. Once symptomatic, all body fluids such as blood, urine, faeces, vomitus, saliva and semen are considered infectious, with blood, faeces and vomit being the most infectious.

Once a person with risk factors for Ebola becomes unwell in the UK, they will be admitted to a healthcare facility and will be tested rapidly, with a result within 24 hours. There will be a number of areas, such as the person's home, which may have been contaminated with body fluids. The Health Protection Team should contact those responsible for the potentially contaminated areas and inform them of the risk assessment of the case and in due course the testing result.

Suspected cases

Areas which may have been contaminated by body fluids, including living areas and bathrooms, should not be used until a test result is available. Public places which the suspected case has contaminated with body fluids (eg vomit, blood, faeces) should be cordoned off and urgent advice sought from the Health Protection Team. Public places through which the case passed transiently, such as corridors, do not need special cleaning if there is no visible contamination.

Cases medically assessed as not infected with Ebola

These cases will either have been tested and found negative, or will have not met medical criteria for testing. No further special action needs to be taken for the waste and isolated objects. Waste can be disposed of as normal and objects cleaned as normal and used again.

Confirmed cases

For confirmed cases, cleaning will be organised with the assistance of the Health Protection Team using a specialist contractor and according to the standards described in the ACDP guidance. Areas potentially contaminated with body fluids of the case will be cleaned wearing PPE.

Cleaning requirements

The following cleaning requirements have been written based on the ACDP guidance for the management of individuals with suspected or confirmed viral haemorrhagic fever, such as Ebola virus. This guidance applies for individuals who have been categorised as high possibility or confirmed Ebola. Specialist advice should be sought from the HPT

All cleaning must be conducted wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

For areas where there has been **no obvious contamination with blood or bodily fluids**:

- affected toilets and commodes should be disinfected with hypochlorite containing 10,000ppm available chlorine
- affected clothing or linen should be contained within an impermeable bag and treated and disposed of as category A waste.

For areas where there has been **contamination with blood or bodily fluids**:

- guidance as above with the following additional measures
- bodily fluids should be mopped up with absorbent material eg disposable paper towels
- the area should then be disinfected with freshly prepared hypochlorite solution containing 1,000ppm ensuring a contact time of two minutes before wiping up with disposable paper towels
- the surface should then be washed with warm water and detergent
- for larger spills, where possible, allow any potential aerosols to settle out
specialist contractors may consider fumigation necessary following assessment

All waste, including linen and potentially contaminated cleaning equipment, should be treated and disposed of as category A waste.