

Situation Report: Outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda

- An outbreak of Ebola virus disease, caused by the Bundibugyo species, has been declared in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu Provinces) and Uganda (Kampala District). While no cases have been confirmed in South Sudan, the country is assessed at very high risk due to porous borders with DRC and Uganda, intense cross-border mobility, a fragile health system and a severe humanitarian context.
- In Ontario, the risk of transmission of Ebola virus disease (EVD) is very low. When an outbreak of EVD is declared outside of Canada, both situational awareness and preparedness are important.
- Recommended actions for healthcare providers:
 - Screen patients for travel history in the 21 days before symptom onset. Up-to-date information about affected regions is available from the [Public Health Ontario Viral Hemorrhagic Fever](#) landing page.
 - If a special pathogen, including Ebola disease, is suspected, immediately;
 - Isolate the patient and implement airborne, droplet and contact precautions.
 - Do not initiate any specimen collection until further consultation.
 - Implement other IPAC measures as outlined in Public Health Ontario's [guidance](#).
 - Notify and engage with hospital or facility infection prevention and control, occupational health and safety and an infectious diseases specialist, if available.
 - Report by phone to Grey Bruce Public Health:
 - Regular Office Hours: 519-376-9420 option 6.
 - After Hours: 519-376-5420.
 - Conduct a risk assessment using Public Health Ontario's Viral Hemorrhagic Fever (VHF) [Clinical Risk Assessment Tool](#).
 - Notify the Ministry of Health via [Health Care Provider Hotline](#) at 1-866-212-2272.

Guidance on the assessment of exposures to potentially rabid animals

- Under *Ontario Regulation 557 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act*, health care providers are required to notify their local public health unit of any person who has had a suspected rabies exposure, to assess risk and determine appropriate management.
- Last year saw unprecedented administration of rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (rPEP) across Ontario, including in Grey-Bruce.
- A thorough risk assessment is required before administering rPEP. As per the Ministry of Health's [Management of Potential Rabies Exposure](#) Guideline, factors to consider include the type of exposure, the species of the animal, and the circumstances of the situation.
- **Domestic animals (dogs, cats, ferrets, cattle, horses, sheep, goats, pigs):** For a patient who has been bitten or scratched by a domestic animal, rPEP is generally not recommended if the animal was behaving normally at the time of the incident and is available for observation. GBPH will coordinate observation of the animal and any required follow-up with the patient.
- **Bats:** Any exposure to a bat (i.e. direct contact, or exposure to saliva or neural tissues/fluids in open wounds or mucous membranes - including even minor or transient contact with the skin) generally requires rPEP as soon as possible. If the bat is available and suitable for testing, GBPH may recommend that initiation of rPEP be delayed pending results, or the series be initiated and discontinued once results are available, depending on the circumstances. Being in the same room with a bat (including while sleeping) is generally not considered an exposure unless it involves a child or adult who is unable to provide a reliable history.
- **Rodents and lagomorphs:** The risk from exposure to these animals is very low, as they are likely to be killed by larger animals that could be transmitting rabies to them. rPEP should only be considered if behaviours were highly unusual. For example, a bite from a squirrel while feeding it would not generally be considered unusual behaviour.
- **Other wildlife and exotic animals:** Only mammals are susceptible to rabies, with foxes, skunks and raccoons being reservoir species for rabies in Canada. If the animal is unavailable for testing and the risk assessment indicates that PEP is warranted, it should be initiated as soon as possible.
- For further information on considerations during a risk assessment, see the Ministry of Health's [Management of Potential Rabies Exposure](#) Guideline.

Resources for Primary Care Professionals

Webinars

- [PHO Webinar: Gambling, Gaming, and Youth Mental Health](#) – June 10, 2026.
- [PHO Webinar: Compassionate, Evidence-Informed Conversations on Cannabis Use in Pregnancy](#) – June 17, 2026.
- [PHO Rounds: Evaluating the Impact of Alcohol Availability on Public Services Use in Northwestern Ontario](#) – June 18, 2026.