

## One Case of Ebola Confirmed, Officials Urge Public to be on the Lookout

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DALLAS — Widespread public awareness and fear has been rampant throughout the United States regarding the deadly and contagious Ebola disease that has killed and sickened thousands in West Africa in the last few months. Federal officials have examined more than 100 possible cases of Ebola in recent weeks but have confirmed only one in the U.S.

The first and so far only case was reported in Dallas, where a Liberian man was diagnosed with the disease shortly after arriving on September 20. The patient, Thomas Eric Duncan, had visited Liberia which had seen the worst of Ebola, claiming 3,400 lives and sickening 7,500.

Currently, Duncan is being treated at a hospital in Dallas and is in critical condition, but his status worsened as he was previously categorized as serious but stable. Meanwhile, further attention is being put to decontaminate the apartment that Duncan was staying in when he first reported symptoms of the illness. The family that was living there has since been relocated and is closely monitored for their health after being in contact with Duncan.

In addition, a decontamination team has collected bed sheets, towels, and a mattress used by Duncan, as well as a suitcase and other personal items he was carrying before he was hospitalized. Health officials are also monitoring about 50 people who may have had contact with Duncan since his arrival in Dallas for signs of the disease's spread. Nine of those people are believed to be at the highest risk but so far, none of the 50 has shown symptoms.



A HAZMAT duo is seen at the Dallas apartment complex where Thomas Eric Duncan, the Ebola patient who traveled from Liberia to Dallas, stayed before being hospitalized.

Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, director of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, told the Associated Press on Saturday that the Dallas case and threat in West Africa of Ebola has increased the attention of the virus among both the public and health workers. Health workers in particular pose as the highest risk; those who have transported Duncan to an ambulance are all being checked and monitored.

On the possibility of more cases being tracked in the Dallas area, Frieden said, “We have already gotten well over 100 inquiries of possible patients. We’ve assessed every one of those with local health departments and hospitals. And just this one patient has tested positive.”

Furthermore, Frieden also commented:

“We expect that we will see more rumors, or concerns, or possibilities of cases. Until there is a positive laboratory test, that is what they are — rumors and concerns.”

Elsewhere in Dallas, federal health officials say they are confident that they can keep the disease in check by screening people traveling from the affected countries.

In addition to doing their own testing of suspected cases, federal officials have helped more than a dozen laboratories around the United States do Ebola testing.

The virus that causes Ebola is not airborne and can be spread only through contact with bodily fluids — blood, sweat, vomit, feces, urine, saliva, or semen — of a person who is showing symptoms.

**Comments—what do you think of the Ebola outbreak and the possibility of it spreading in the U.S.? Share your opinions down below:**