



Ministry of Health and Sanitation-GoSL
Directorate of Health Security and Emergencies

Marburg Fact Sheet

- On August 5, 2021, the Health Authorities in the Republic of Guinea confirmed a case of Marburg virus disease in Nzérékoré region, Gueckedou Prefecture, which is bordering Kono and Kailahun districts. The virus was confirmed in a 46-year-old male resident of Temessadou Boket village who died.
- Samples have been sent to Dakar, Senegal, for further analysis and confirmation.
- To date, there are no known human cases of Marburg in Sierra Leone.

What is Marburg Virus?

- Marburg virus disease is caused by a virus that can spread from infected bats to people.
- Marburg virus causes a serious sickness in people and can even cause death.
- Marburg virus disease is not common, but once a person gets sick with Marburg, it can spread quickly from person to person.
- Marburg mainly lives in a type of bat that eats fruits and sleeps in caves.
- The type of bat that has Marburg virus lives in many parts of Africa, including Sierra Leone.
- Bats with Marburg do not get sick but can still spread the sickness to other bats and to people.

Sign and Symptoms of Marburg in People

- Many of the signs and symptoms of Marburg in people are the same as other sicknesses like malaria, typhoid, and Ebola. This makes it important to go to your nearest hospital for early testing for any fever.
- Signs and symptoms of Marburg in people are:
 - Fever
 - Headache
 - Weakness and feeling tired
 - Muscle aches and pains
 - Diarrhea
 - Abdominal pain
 - Nausea and vomiting
 - Bleeding from openings of the body – mouth, nose, ears, etc.

The Different Ways Marburg Virus is Spread

- Marburg can spread from **a bat to a person** through:
 - Touching bats or the spit, wet, blood, toilet, or body parts of a bat with Marburg
 - Touching surfaces, such as the inside of a cave, and items that a bat with Marburg or its spit, wet, blood, or toilet have touched
 - Eating or drinking something that a bat with Marburg or its spit, wet, blood, or toilet have touched
- Actions that make it more likely for Marburg to spread from bats to people:
 - Touching bats
 - Hunting, butchering, or eating bats
 - Visiting caves, including using them for shelter or cultural ceremonies
 - Eating fruit that has been bitten by bats
 - Eating fruit and vegetables without washing them
 - Leaving food and water and their containers uncovered
 - Trying to kill or chase all the bats from an area
 - Working in caves or underground areas where bats live, such as mining
- Marburg can spread from **person to person** through:
 - Touching the body, blood, wet, toilet, vomit, or other body fluids of a person who is sick with or has died from Marburg
 - Touching surfaces and items such as clothing or bedding that the body fluids of a person with Marburg have touched
 - Unprotected sex with a person who is or has been sick with Marburg
- Marburg (from a bat or another person) can enter a person's body through:
 - The mouth, nose, or eyes
 - An opening in the skin like a cut or sore
 - The private parts through unprotected sex

How to Protect Yourself and Others from Marburg

Preventing spread from person to person

- Once there has been a case of Marburg in the area near where you live, it is important to take care and be watchful for any potential case in your community.
- Know the early symptoms of Marburg – fever, weakness, diarrhea, headache and body ache.
- Many of the symptoms of Marburg are like those for malaria and typhoid, so it is important to go to a hospital for early testing and treatment for any fever.
- If you or someone you know has symptoms of Marburg, go to the nearest hospital or call 117 right away.
 - Early treatment is the best chance of survival for a person sick with Marburg. When someone gets early care and treatment, they have a better chance at healing quickly and with fewer problems.
 - Getting early treatment can also protect your family and loved ones from getting Marburg.
- If someone you know gets sick or dies with symptoms of Marburg, do not touch the person, their body fluids, or any items they or their body fluids have touched.

- If someone you know gets sick or dies after caring for another sick person, make sure to tell your nearest hospital or community health worker about the person's earlier contact with a sick person.
- If someone you know is afraid that they have Marburg, do not help them hide.
 - Help them do what is best for them, best for their family, and best for Mama Salone. Call 117 right away to make sure they get checked so that they can get the proper care.
- Another way that we can watch for Marburg is by reporting all deaths by calling 117.
 - Reporting every death helps health workers to know about the death and to decide if any investigation is needed.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water.
 - Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up germs, including viruses, that are on those surfaces. When your hand touches those germs and then you touch your eyes, nose or mouth, the germs can enter your body and can make you sick.
 - Washing our hands with soap and water frequently kills germs, including viruses, and is one of the best ways to keep healthy and help stop the spread of sickness.
 - Always remember to wash your hands:
 - before, during, and after preparing food;
 - before eating food;
 - before touching your eyes nose and mouth;
 - before and after visiting or caring for someone who is sick;
 - after using the toilet;
 - and after changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet.
 - If there is no water, use hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol-based.
- If you have any questions or want to know more information about Marburg, call 117 free on any network.

Preventing spread from a bat to person

- Because bats with Marburg do not show signs and symptoms of sickness, you cannot tell which bats have sickness. That is why it is best to be safe by avoiding contact with all bats.
- Avoid touching bats.
 - Touching bats and their body fluids such as spit, wet, blood, or toilet are ways that Marburg can spread from bats to people.
 - If you find a dead bat, do not touch the bat with your bare hands.
 - Use rubber gloves or plastic bags that cannot be easily pierced to protect your hands, and a shovel or an item like banana leaves to move the dead bat without touching it directly.
 - Wash your hands and arms immediately with soap and clean water.
- Avoid hunting, butchering, and eating bats.
 - Touching bats and their body fluids such as spit, wet, blood, and toilet are ways that Marburg can spread from bats to people.
 - Visiting areas where bats live, especially caves, and hunting, butchering, and eating bats puts people at high risk.

- Marburg is present in the meat and body fluids of infected bats, so touching those things during butchering puts people at high risk.
- Avoid visiting caves, including using caves for shelter or cultural ceremonies.
 - The bats that can have Marburg live mostly in caves. Touching bats, their body fluids such as spit, wet, blood, and toilet and surfaces or items that their body fluids have touched are ways that Marburg can spread from bats to people.
 - People who go into caves should be careful not to come in contact with bat body fluids, including touching surfaces and then touching their mouth, nose, or eyes or any opening in their skin like a cut or sore.
 - If possible, protect yourself from coming into contact with any bat body fluids in the cave. Wear a head covering to protect your head and rubber gloves to protect your hands. Cover your eyes with glasses and your nose and mouth with a mask or cloth.
- Avoid eating fruit that has been bitten by bats.
 - Do not eat any part of the bitten fruit.
 - Do not give the bitten fruit to an animal to eat.
 - The type of bats that can have Marburg are mainly fruit-eating bats, and Marburg can spread from bats to people through the spit of the bat.
- Always wash all fruits and vegetables with clean water before cooking or eating.
 - The type of bats that can have Marburg are mainly fruit-eating bats. Bats that eat fruit may also wet and toilet on fruits or other crops while they are eating or flying around.
 - Marburg can spread from bats to people through the wet and toilet of the bat, including when people touch or eat something with bat wet or toilet on it.
- Always cover food and water and their containers to make sure bat spit, wet, and toilet cannot enter.
 - Marburg can spread from bats to people through the spit, wet, and toilet of the bat.
 - Bat spit, wet, or toilet that enters our food, water, or containers of food and water can make us sick.
- Always wash your hands regularly and especially:
 - After any contact with a bat
 - After visiting areas where bats live or have been
- Avoid trying to kill or chase all the bats from an area.
 - Trying to kill or chase all the bats from an area does not work and can actually make it more likely that Marburg can spread from bats to people.
 - At best, stop going to areas known to harbor bats especially in large concentrations.

Where to Find More Information on Marburg

Further information on Marburg can be found on the World Health Organization's and U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention's websites:

<https://www.who.int/csr/disease/marburg/en/>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/marburg-virus-disease>

<https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/marburg/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/marburg/pdf/factsheet.pdf>