

Viral Hemorrhagic Fever

Agent(s): Viruses of four distinct families including *Arenaviridae* (Argentine, Bolivian, Venezuelan, Brazilian, Chapare and Lujo hemorrhagic fevers, and Lassa fever), *Filoviridae* (Ebola and Marburg hemorrhagic fevers), *Bunyaviridae* (Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever, Rift Valley fever, and hemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome [HFRS]), and *Flaviviridae* (dengue hemorrhagic fever, yellow fever, Omsk hemorrhagic fever, and Kyasansur Forest disease).

Mode of Transmission: Varies by agent. Arenaviruses are carried by rodents and are contracted by breathing dust contaminated with saliva, feces or urine of infected rodents, but may also be transmitted person-to-person by infected patients. Filovirus hemorrhagic fevers are contracted through direct contact with blood or body fluids from infected animals or persons. Bunyaviruses are typically transmitted by the bites of arthropods but may also be contracted through contact with the blood and body fluids of infected livestock or people. Hemorrhagic fevers caused by Flaviviruses are typically transmitted by the bites of arthropods. Historically, among the viral hemorrhagic fevers, only dengue hemorrhagic fever has been found to occur naturally in North America.

Signs/Symptoms: Vary by type, including but not limited to, malaise, headache, fever, bleeding from the nose and gums, rash, appearance of blood in the eyes, or vomiting. Case-fatality rates can range from 1% (dengue) to 90% (Ebola).

Prevention: Depending on agent, exposure to hemorrhagic diseases can be reduced by rodent control in and around the home in endemic areas, by isolation of infected persons during their febrile period, by preventing contact with blood or body fluids of sick or dead animals, and by avoiding the bites of mosquito or tick vectors.

Other Important Information: Viral hemorrhagic fevers are classified as potential bioweapons because they could cause high mortality, public panic, or social disruption.

Since becoming a reportable condition in 2003, no cases of viral hemorrhagic fever have been reported in Virginia. During 2011, one case of dengue hemorrhagic fever was reported and is counted for surveillance purposes as an arboviral condition. It is discussed in the Arboviral Infection section of this report.