

Mesa County EMS System
Viral Illness Surveillance Protocols
October 15, 2014

Due to the recent advent of Ebola causing widespread concerns, it will be necessary to change some of our pre-hospital practices for our patients presenting with febrile illness. We are moving into the cold and flu season and we will be seeing more of these patients calling for our assistance. Please keep the following points in mind as we go into this winter season:

First and foremost – Protect YOURSELF!

1. Get a flu shot
2. Make sure your ambulances have readily available and stocked PPE
 - a. Gloves
 - b. Facial protection
 - c. Gowns
3. Make sure you are aware of proper post-transport decontamination protocols for your ambulance.

Screening patients – Remember that Ebola can be effectively ruled out by obtaining a travel and contact history. As such we will start immediately screening all patients for possible Ebola infection. This will occur in two parts:

1. Effective immediately we have implemented a screening function using the GJRCC dispatch system. If a possible Ebola patient is detected a separate response will occur. Details will come from your agency.
2. All Mesa County patients should be screened using the “Mesa County EMS Ebola Screening Questionnaire”. Follow directions there.

During care and possible transport of a patient suspected of having Ebola, you are to consider the following care protocols:

1. If patient is critical (unstable vital signs, severe respiratory distress), call the EDP at St. Mary’s immediately and ask for entry procedures for the ED. You may be directed to an alternate entry point.
 - a. Use the most minimally invasive respiratory assistance possible
 - i. Avoid intubation if possible
 - ii. Avoid nebulization if possible
 - iii. CPAP is preferred ventilator assistance if appropriate
 - b. IO may be used for access primarily
 - c. Use all available contact precaution PPE at your disposal
2. If patient is not critical:
 - a. Call EDP at St. Mary’s for assistance PRIOR to loading patient in ambulance
 - b. Patients may be quarantined in place or specialty transport options may occur

Mesa County EMS Ebola Screening Questionnaire

All Mesa County EMS patients should be screened before transport using the following protocol:

Does the patient have or have had a fever > 101.5 (38.6 C) AND any of the following additional symptoms:

- Severe Headache
- Recent onset of any diarrhea, vomiting, or bloody discharge from mouth or nose

NO – Transport as normal

YES – Proceed to secondary questions

In the past 3 weeks BEFORE the onset of symptoms has the patient had:

- Residence in or travel to a location where an Ebola outbreak is occurring?
 - Western Africa
 - Spain
- Contact with blood or body fluids of a patient known to have or suspected to have Ebola
- Direct handling of bats or non-human primates from Western Africa?

NO – Transport as normal

YES – Consider the patient a potential Ebola risk

If Ebola is a possibility, consult with the EDP at SMH, if, after consult with the EDP Ebola is suspected, phone dispatch immediately with an EIDS notification. Don all appropriate PPE and remain in place with patient until contacted and further instructions given for care and transport.