Is it Flu or Ebola?

Flu (influenza)

The flu is common and contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. The flu is different from a cold.

Flu can cause mild to severe illness, and complications can lead to death.

How Flu Germs Are Spread

The flu is spread mainly by droplets made when people who have flu cough, sneeze, or talk. Viruses can also spread on surfaces, but this is less common.

People with flu can spread the virus before, during, and after they are sick.

Who Gets The Flu?

Anyone can get the flu.

Some people—like very young children, older adults, and people with some health conditions—are at high risk of serious complications.

Signs and Symptoms of Flu

The signs and symptoms of flu usually develop within 2 days after exposure. Symptoms come on quickly and all at once.

- Fever or feeling feverish
- Headache
- Muscle or body aches
- Feeling very tired (fatigue)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose

Ebola

Ebola is a rare and deadly disease caused by infection with an Ebola virus.

How Ebola Germs are Spread

Ebola can only be spread by direct contact with blood or body fluids from:
- A person who is sick or who has died of Ebola.
- Objects like needles that have been in contact with the blood or body fluids of a person sick with Ebola.

Ebola cannot spread in the air or by water or food.

Who Gets Ebola?

People most at risk of getting Ebola are:
- Healthcare providers taking care of Ebola patients.
- Friends and family who have had unprotected direct contact with blood or body fluids of a person sick with Ebola.

Signs and Symptoms of Ebola

The signs and symptoms of Ebola can appear 2 to 21 days after exposure. The average time is 8 to 10 days. Symptoms of Ebola develop over several days and become progressively more severe.

- People with Ebola cannot spread the virus until symptoms appear.
- Fever
- Severe headache
- Muscle pain
- Feeling very tired (fatigue)
- Vomiting and diarrhea develop after 3–6 days
- Weakness (can be severe)
- Stomach pain
- Unexplained bleeding or bruising

For more information about the flu and Ebola, visit www.cdc.gov/flu and www.cdc.gov/ebola.

To discuss a possible exposure, request laboratory testing, or report a suspected case, contact the Louisiana Office of Public Health immediately at 504-568-8313 or after hours 800-256-2748.