

Travax® News Alert Sample

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Shoreland's *Travax News Alert Service*

Dominican Republic: Diphtheria in 3 Regions

According to PAHO, 5 laboratory-confirmed cases of diphtheria (all deceased), a significant increase over average incidence, have occurred since January 13, 2021 (only in unvaccinated children aged less than 15 years) in Enriquillo, Higuamo, and Valdesia regions. All travelers should be current with a diphtheria-containing vaccine (primary series or booster within the last 10 years). Diphtheria should be considered in any traveler presenting with pharyngitis within 10 days of returning from the Dominican Republic.

New Caledonia: Hepatitis A Increase

According to international health authorities, more than 70 cases of hepatitis A, a significant increase over average incidence, have been reported since January 2021, including in Nouméa. Travelers should observe food and beverage precautions and hand hygiene (frequent, thorough handwashing). Shoreland continues to recommend vaccination for all travelers going to New Caledonia. Because of possible ongoing risk and the long incubation period of hepatitis A, vaccination should be considered in any unvaccinated or incompletely vaccinated traveler who had been in New Caledonia in the past 2 months.

Senegal: Widespread Violent Protests

Widespread, violent protests and civil unrest in response to legal charges against an opposition politician have been reported since early March throughout the country, especially in Dakar, resulting in casualties. Further unrest is likely. Road closures (especially due to burning tires) and transportation delays (including flights via Blaise Diagne International Airport) should be expected. Extreme vigilance is recommended; bystanders are at risk of harm from violence or from the response by authorities. Reports indicate use of live ammunition by police. Travelers should avoid demonstrations, remain indoors whenever possible, carry a fully charged communication device, follow the advice of local authorities, and monitor the situation through local media and embassy communications.

United States: Ebola Entry Screening

Ebola health screenings are in place for arrivals at the 6 designated US ports of entry due to the ongoing outbreaks in N'Zérékoré Region, Guinea and North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. All travelers who have been in Guinea or DRC within 21 days prior to arrival are affected.

Guinea: Ebola Virus Disease in Nzérékoré Region

According to WHO's regional office and Guinea's Ministry of Health, 8 laboratory-confirmed cases of Ebola virus disease (EVD; caused by EBOV-Zaire strain) per week are being reported in Nzérékoré Region. Seventeen cases (including 13 laboratory-confirmed cases and 6 deaths) of Ebola virus disease (EVD; caused by EBOV-Zaire strain) have been reported since January 28, 2021, in Nzérékoré Region, which neighbors Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The index case was a health care worker who died and was buried (using unsafe burial practices) on February 1; six of the cases attended the burial and the eighth case (epidemiology unknown) traveled from Gouéké to Léro, Kankan Region where he was diagnosed and then transferred back to Nzérékoré Region; multigenerational transmission appears to be occurring in the same chain. Contact tracing and follow-up of more than 500 people in Conakry (1 case was hospitalized here) and Nzérékoré Region are ongoing; genomic sequencing of the virus is underway at Institut Pasteur

Dakar. A vaccination campaign (Ervebo; Merck) which began on February 23 has vaccinated more than 1,000 high-risk contacts and health care workers in Nzérékoré Region; more than 11,000 vaccine doses are available. The world's largest ever EVD regional outbreak (28,600 cases) occurred in 2013-16 and originated in the same Nzérékoré Region. According to WHO, the outbreak is unrelated to the ongoing outbreak in North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. US responders can request EVD vaccine through the CDC (via email spathvax@cdc.gov with subject line: request for Ebola vaccine). Travelers arriving in the US (and possibly other countries) who have been in Guinea within 21 days prior to arrival will be routed to a designated port of entry to undergo additional screening. Travelers returning from Guinea should self-monitor for 21 days after return and telephone ahead before presenting to any medical facility if they become ill. WHO considers the public health risk to be high at the national and regional levels.

Democratic Republic of the Congo: Ebola Virus Disease in North Kivu Province

According to WHO's regional office and press sources citing local health authorities, 11 laboratory-confirmed cases (including 4 deaths) of Ebola virus disease (EVD) have occurred since January 25, 2021, in Butembo and in Biena, Katwa, and Musienene health zones (all near Butembo), North Kivu Province. Genomic sequencing shows that the virus in this outbreak is the same as that in the previous North Kivu outbreak (2018 to April 2020) and is likely due to transmission from a recovered EVD case with viral persistence versus from an environmental source. The index case was the wife of a recovered EVD case; the second case is epidemiologically linked directly to this case, and multigenerational transmission has since occurred in the same chain. Of concern, the index patient visited at least 3 health facilities in 2 health zones and was buried (using unsafe burial practices) in a third health zone (Musienene). Contact tracing and follow-up of more than 790 people in Biena, Butembo, Kalunguta, Katwa, and Musienene health zones are ongoing. A vaccination campaign (Ervebo; Merck) which began on February 15 has vaccinated more than 770 high-risk contacts and health care workers in Biena, Butembo, Katwa, and Musienene health zones; more than 8,000 vaccine doses are available. US responders' providers can request EVD vaccine through the CDC (via email spathvax@cdc.gov with subject line: request for Ebola vaccine). Travelers arriving in the US who have been in DRC within 21 days prior to arrival will be routed to a designated port of entry to undergo additional screening. Travelers returning from DRC should self-monitor for 21 days after return and telephone ahead before presenting to any medical facility if they become ill.

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