Ebola Virus Infection

Ebola is a rare but deadly virus that causes bleeding inside and outside the body. As the virus spreads through the body, it damages the immune system and organs. Ultimately, it causes levels of blood-clotting cells to drop. This leads to severe, uncontrollable bleeding.

The disease, also known as Ebola hemorrhagic fever or Ebola virus, kills up to 90% of people who are infected.

Could There Be an Outbreak in the U.S.?  
Although movies and books describe major outbreaks of Ebola-like diseases in the U.S., they’re just fiction, so far serious Ebola cases have only shown up in Central and West Africa, though they were very deadly.

The CDC says there’s no significant risk of Ebola in the United States. It has strong safety measures in place for people who have Ebola and are brought to the U.S. for treatment.

Ebola can spread from country to country when people travel. So it is possible for it to reach the U.S. if an infected person travels here. But there are ways to prevent people from coming to U.S. airports with the disease.

Airline crews are trained to spot the symptoms of Ebola in passengers flying from places where the virus is found. Crews are told to quarantine anyone who looks infected.

How Is Ebola Diagnosed?

Test of blood and tissues can diagnose Ebola. If you have Ebola, you’ll be isolated from the public immediately to prevent the spread.

Ebola isn’t as contagious as more common viruses like colds, influenza or measles. It spreads to people by contact with the skin or bodily fluids of an infected animal, like a monkey, chimp, or fruit bat. Then it moves from person to person. Then it moves from one person to the same way. Those who care for a sick person or bury someone who has died from the disease often get it.

Other ways to get Ebola include touching contaminated needles or surfaces. You can’t get Ebola from air, water, or food. A person who has Ebola but has no symptoms can’t spread the disease, either.

What Are the Symptoms of Ebola?

Early on, Ebola can feel like the flu or other illnesses. Symptoms show up 2 to 21 days after infection and usually include:

- Higher fever
- Headache
- Joint and muscle aches
- Sore throat
- Weakness
- Stomach pain
- Lack of appetite

As the disease gets worse, it causes bleeding inside the body, as well as from the eyes, ears, and nose. Some people will vomit or cough up blood, have bloody diarrhea, and get a rash.

Source: http://www.webmd.com
Diseases Doctors Often Get Wrong

When you experience strange pains, mysterious digestive issues, or other unexplained symptoms, you'd hope a trip to the doctor would solve your health woes. But sometimes, doctors have just as much trouble identifying certain disorders and conditions as their patients.

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)
Some conditions are difficult to diagnose because there is no real test to prove their existence; rather, they require a diagnosis of elimination, as doctors rule out all other possibilities. Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) -- a chronic condition that affects the large intestine and causes abdominal pain, cramping, bloating, diarrhea, and/or constipation -- is one of these cases. According to diagnostic criteria, a patient should have symptoms for at least six months before first being seen for a formal evaluation, and discomfort should be present at least three days a month in the last three months before being diagnosed with IBS.

Celiac disease
So much confusion surrounds celiac disease -- an immune reaction to gluten that triggers inflammation in the small intestine -- that it takes the average patient six to 10 years to be properly diagnosed. Celiac sufferers would, in theory, have digestive problems when eating gluten-containing foods like wheat, barley, and rye, but in fact, only about half of people diagnosed with the disease have experienced diarrhea and weight loss. Celiac disease can also cause itchy skin, headaches, joint pain, and acid reflux or heartburn, and it's all too easy to blame these symptoms on other things. A blood test can diagnose celiac disease no matter what symptoms are present, and an endoscopy can determine any damage that's been done to the small intestine.

Loving Legumes

If you have type 2 diabetes, you probably already know that you need to keep a close eye on what you eat. Certain foods that include beans, lentils, and chickpeas. Such foods are naturally high in protein and fiber – two components that may boost your heart health. Legumes are also rated low on the glycemic index, which measures the amount of sugar in a food. Eating foods on the low end of the index may help control diabetes better.

Legumes, which we always thought were good for the heart, actually are good for heart in ways we didn't expect. Among people with diabetes not only did their glucose become better, but – and this surprised us – it had significant effect on blood pressure.

For the study, researchers had 121 people eat either 1 cup of legumes or 1 cup of whole wheat foods a day. After about three months, researchers noted both groups saw a drop in blood sugar and blood pressure levels. But those eating legumes had the most improvement in both levels.

Focusing on a better diet
Other studies have suggested that legumes can lower the risk for type 2 diabetes cardiovascular disease, and even cancer.

Legumes will do well for you. They will help you keep your blood pressure down and your blood glucose under control. They can help you keep your cholesterol down, too.

Source: http://inhealth.cnn.com/
Diseases Doctors Often Get Wrong (cont.)

Fibromyalgia
Fibromyalgia, which is characterized by widespread musculoskeletal pain, involves "medically unexplained symptoms" -- a term doctors use to describe persistent complaints that don't appear to have an obvious physical cause. When doctors can't find a root cause for a patient's chronic pain and fatigue, they often settle on this diagnosis. This may involve seeing specialists and ruling out other diseases, some of which prove equally difficult to diagnose. There are studies that show that people with certain symptoms who show up at a rheumatologist will be diagnosed with fibromyalgia, but if the same patients show up at a gastroenterologist they'll be diagnosed as having irritable bowel syndrome.

Rheumatoid arthritis
Unexplained aches and pains may also be caused by rheumatoid arthritis (RA), an autoimmune disorder. Unlike osteoarthritis (the "wear and tear" kind that appears as people get older), RA causes inflammation and painful swelling of joints and can occur at any age. Early stages of RA can mimic many other conditions -- sometimes it's just a sense of aches or stiffness in the joints, which could be caused by a lot of different things. Blood tests can help detect the presence of inflammation in the body, he says, but an exact diagnosis of RA also must take into account a patient's medical history and a doctor's careful physical exam.

Multiple sclerosis
Another autoimmune disease, multiple sclerosis (MS) occurs when the immune system attacks the body's own nerve cells and disrupts communication between the brain and the rest of the body. Some of the first symptoms of MS are often numbness, weakness, or tingling in one or more limbs, but that's not always the case. Multiple sclerosis can be episodic; the disease waxes and wanes. Symptoms may be more or less severe in different people. Once a doctor does suspect MS, however, a spinal tap or MRI can help confirm the diagnosis.

Lyme disease
You probably know to look out for tick bites and the telltale bull’s eye rash that can form around them if a person is infected with Lyme disease. But not everyone develops this rash - and Lyme disease's other symptoms can easily be confused for other conditions. It's important to remove the tick immediately and see a doctor right away. Quickly removing a tick can possibly prevent the transfer of dangerous bacteria, and antibiotics for Lyme disease are most effective when given immediately.

Lupus
The most distinctive sign of lupus is a butterfly-shaped rash across a patient's cheeks, but that's not present in all cases. For those who don't develop the rash, diagnosis can be a long and difficult process, says Shapiro. Lupus can present in different ways; it can affect the joints, kidneys, brain, skin, and lungs, and can also mimic many different issues. There is no one way to diagnose lupus, but blood and urine tests, along with a complete physical exam, are usually involved. Treatment also depends on a patient's individual signs and symptoms, and medications and dosages may need to be adjusted as the disease flares and subsides.

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Diseases Doctors Often Get Wrong (cont.)

**Polycystic ovary syndrome**
Irregular periods, unexplained weight gain, and difficulty getting pregnant can all be symptoms of polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), a hormonal disorder affecting women of reproductive age. Many women with this condition also have enlarged ovaries with numerous small cysts, but not everyone with PCOS has these enlarged ovaries, and not everyone with enlarged ovaries has PCOS. To be diagnosed with PCOS, a woman must also be experiencing infrequent or prolonged periods or have elevated levels of male hormones, called androgens, in her blood. Androgen excess may cause abnormal hair growth on the face and body, but women of certain ethnic backgrounds may not show physical signs.

**Appendicitis**
You might think that an inflamed or burst appendix should be easy to identify, and often, it is: typical appendicitis symptoms include nausea, pain and tenderness around the belly button, and possibly a low-grade fever. But not always. Some people have an appendix that points backward instead of forward in the body, so the symptoms present in a different location. And sometimes people do have pain, but then the appendix ruptures and the pain is relieved so they think they're fine. In this case, he says, intestinal fluids can seep into the abdominal category and cause a potentially life-threatening infection.

**Endometriosis**
Many perfectly healthy women deal with menstrual pain and discomfort, so it's not surprising that endometriosis is often misdiagnosed. However, women with endometriosis (in which uterine tissue grows outside the uterus) often report pelvic pain, cramping, and heavy bleeding that's far worse than usual, and that gets worse over time. A pelvic exam can sometimes detect endometrial tissue or cysts that have been caused by it.

**Migraines**
For many migraine sufferers, nothing could be more obvious than the severe headaches, which are usually characterized by intense throbbing or pulsing. But some people may get migraines without even knowing it. Sometimes migraine symptoms can be very severe, where the patient can even develop paralysis, and other times they can be very subtle. Patients might feel dizzy or lightheaded or feel a vague discomfort in their heads, and oftentimes they'll get treated with medication that might not be appropriate for a true migraine.

**Cluster headaches**
Cluster headaches are extremely painful but also very rare, affecting less than 1 million Americans. They tend to occur close together, often on the same day, and last 30 minutes to three hours, on average. Scientists aren't sure why, but cluster headaches tend to occur when seasons change. Because of this, they can sometimes be misdiagnosed as sinus headaches.

Source: http://www.cnn.com

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