TRAVEL ALERT – EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE (EBV)

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organization are currently monitoring and responding to an outbreak of Ebola Virus in West Africa. At this time, the countries Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria are affected, and neighboring countries in the region continue to be at risk for new cases.

Please be advised of this situation if you are considering travel to West Africa and make an appointment with the University Health Center or your own health care provider for more information. The most recent information presented by the CDC recommends travelers avoid all nonessential travel to Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, and heightened personal protection precautions be exercised for travel to Nigeria.

For students and faculty who have recently traveled to these countries, please be aware of the symptoms of Ebola virus disease (EVD) and seek medical attention immediately if any symptoms develop. Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to the virus, though 8-10 days is most common. Initial symptoms can be confused with other diseases such as influenza and malaria. The CDC currently recommends watching for the following symptoms: Fever > 101.5°F with additional symptoms such as severe headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, joint and muscle aches, or unexplained bleeding. If you have symptoms that appear to match these, please see your health care provider or the University Health Center as soon as possible and be sure to tell them where you have traveled. Please wear a mask when you enter the health facility for both your own and others’ protection.

Persons who may have been exposed to Ebola virus and are considered high risk for the disease include those individuals who have recently traveled to the affected areas and: 1) have been involved in direct care of patients with EVD; 2) have participated in funeral rites or other direct exposure to human remains in that geographic area; 3) have handled bats, rodents or primates in a disease-affected area; or 4) have participated in laboratory processing of body fluids of suspected or confirmed Ebola virus disease patients. Ebola virus is transmitted through direct contact with body fluids and secretions (e.g. blood, saliva, urine, feces and semen) of an infected person; it is NOT transmitted through the air or in food or water.

If you have been in direct contact with another person who has been recently traveling to the affected areas, and they are now becoming sick with similar symptoms, be increasingly attentive to your own health. The disease is most readily transmitted while a person is actively exhibiting symptoms.

For more information on the Ebola Virus outbreak, please visit the CDC Website at www.CDC.gov.