



Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers (VHF)

(Ebola, Marburg, Lassa, Rift Valley, Yellow Fever, Dengue Fever, Hantavirus, Congo-Crimean, and Venezuelan Hemorrhagic fevers)

Revision 5-26-15



**Missouri Dept of Health and Senior Services (800) 392-0272 (24 hours)
State Public Health Laboratory (573) 751-3334 or (573) 522-1444**

**Contact the MSPHL at (573) 751-3334 or (800) 392-0272 prior to
collecting any samples
to obtain specific instructions.**

**The SPHL is not equipped to process any specimen for hemorrhagic fevers other than
Ebola virus. All specimens will be transported to the Centers for Disease Control
(CDC).**

**Remember that these samples may be highly infectious! Extreme caution should be
taken in collecting, preparing for shipment and transporting any material suspected
of being contaminated with a biological agent.**

The following information is meant only as a general guideline.

Specimen collection and transport

Clinical:

Collect whole blood*, serum, tissues.

* Whole blood may be frozen. Do not centrifuge suspected VHF specimens because this increases risk to the lab worker. If serum specimens have already been prepared, these can be used. Place specimens in plastic tubes for shipping and storage and be sure that the tubes are sealed and properly labeled. Ship frozen on dry ice.

For fatal cases collect liver biopsy, skin biopsy, as well as other tissues for biopsy (spleen, lung, heart, and kidney). Biopsy specimens should be fixed in formalin and stored at room temperature (do not freeze).

DHSS staff must be contacted in suspect Ebola virus cases. Consultation will occur between DHSS staff, CDC staff, MSPHL staff and the submitting facility to establish if the case is valid for testing. In valid cases, two specimens must be collected and simultaneously shipped to the MSPHL and the CDC for testing. Only whole blood specimens are acceptable for the MSPHL.

Signs and Symptoms:

Within a few days of becoming infected with VHF: High fever, headache, muscle aches, stomach pain, fatigue, diarrhea, sore throat, rash, red and itchy eyes, vomiting blood, bloody diarrhea.

Within one week of becoming infected with VHF: chest pain, blindness, bleeding, shock, and death.

- **Contact Precautions for healthcare workers.**
- **Decontamination is accomplished with hypochlorite or phenolic disinfectants.**
- **Isolation measures and barrier nursing procedures are indicated.**