

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Tennessee Department of Health announced today three new Ebola resources for Tennesseans:

1. Tennesseans with questions about the disease may call a toll-free number to obtain accurate, timely information: **1-877-857-2945**. This number will be active starting Oct. 22, 2014.

2. TDH is providing additional information about Ebola virus disease on our website, including summaries of weekly activities and adding links to other sources of reliable information: <http://health.state.tn.us/Ceds/ebola.htm>.

3. Should a confirmed case occur in Tennessee, the department will make a public announcement and post information to the TDH website: <http://health.state.tn.us/>.

"We are glad there is increased awareness about this disease and we especially appreciate the efforts of our health care partners in prevention, detection and response planning," said TDH Commissioner John Dreyzehner, MD, MPH. "We all need to have an understanding of where the current risk exists and to make sure our concerns are based on facts and not on rumors."

"If you have not traveled to Liberia, Guinea or Sierra Leone within the last 21 days and if you have not been exposed to body fluids of a confirmed Ebola virus disease patient, you do not have an appreciable risk for Ebola," said State Epidemiologist Tim Jones, MD. "This is not an airborne disease, so those most at risk are people who have been in contact with body fluids of a confirmed patient, especially healthcare workers, family members and friends."

With cold and flu season approaching, many people across Tennessee will develop fevers and have nausea which may cause additional concern this year. Health care providers may ask more questions about a patient's symptoms and travel history, which is part of an effective effort to provide care and to stop the spread of all illnesses. Getting a flu vaccine can eliminate one reason for a trip to the doctor.

"Flu represents a clear and present danger and every year too many Tennesseans unnecessarily die from this common illness," Dreyzehner said. "Some incorrectly regard flu as a really bad cold. It's not; it can and does kill many every flu season. If you have not had your flu shot or nasal spray yet, we urge you to get it now. It could save your life."

The mission of the Tennessee Department of Health is to protect, promote and improve the health and prosperity of people in Tennessee. TDH has facilities in all 95 counties and provides direct services for more than one in five Tennesseans annually as well as indirect services for everyone in the state, including emergency response to health threats, licensure of health professionals, regulation of health care facilities and inspection of food service establishments. Learn more about TDH services and programs at <http://health.state.tn.us/>.

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This news release can be accessed online at <http://news.tn.gov/taxonomy/term/30>.

Connect with TDH on Facebook and Twitter @TNDeptofHealth!

Note to media: Starting today weekly summaries of Ebola virus disease-related information and activities will be posted to the Tennessee Department of Health website at this address: <http://health.state.tn.us/Ceds/ebola.htm>.