
Weekly Ebola Case Total Rises for 1st Time This Year

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Last week, 124 new cases of Ebola were registered: 39 of them in Guinea, 5 in Liberia and 80 in Sierra Leone.

"Weekly case incidence increased in all three countries for the first time this year," the WHO said in its most recent update.

The organization warned that some people continue to engage in unsafe practices, thus increasing their risk of becoming infected or infecting others.

It said that the virus continues to spread geographically in Guinea – with 39 cases in the most recent week vs. 30 in the prior week – and that it has multiple foci of transmission in Sierra Leone.

The WHO said that one of the foci of infection was an unsecured burial, an event that has resulted in 11 new confirmed cases so far and demonstrates that procedures that have been shown to prevent infection are still not being followed by all.

Sierra Leone experienced 80 new cases last week, vs. 65 the previous week.

The WHO said that "significant challenges" are confronting authorities seeking to limit the spread of the virus.

One such obstacle to dealing with the disease is that it cannot always be determined what the

precise origin of new cases is, a fact that makes it impossible for health authorities to fully control the transmission chain.

Another important obstacle to dealing with the disease is that people occasionally have been rejecting the prevention and treatment teams, sometimes violently.

To date, 22,495 cases – whether confirmed, probable or suspected – have been registered in the three hardest-hit African nations, and of those 8,981 people have died.

This is the worst Ebola epidemic since the virus was discovered in 1976 near the river of that name in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly Zaire.
