Ebola Virus Disease: Leaflet for students arriving from West Africa

Ebola virus disease is a serious disease with high mortality rates for which there are no licensed treatments or vaccines. The current outbreak is most active in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. There have also been cases in Nigeria, Senegal and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

What are the symptoms of Ebola?
Symptoms include fever, weakness, muscle pain, headache and sore throat. This is followed by vomiting, diarrhoea, rash, and in some cases, bleeding.

How does it spread among people?
Ebola virus disease is generally not spread through routine social contact (such as shaking hands) with people who do not have symptoms. People can become infected with the Ebola virus if they come into contact with the blood, body fluids or organs of an infected person. The incubation period following contact is 2 to 21 days. After this period the person will not develop Ebola.

What should I do if I become unwell in the UK?

- If you feel unwell with symptoms such as fever, chills, muscle aches, headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, sore throat or rash and
- you have arrived in the UK from Guinea, Liberia or Sierra Leone, within the past 21 days

You should stay at home and immediately telephone 111 or 999 and explain that you have recently arrived from West Africa. You should also say if you have had contact with anyone who was diagnosed with Ebola.

These services will provide advice and arrange for you to be seen in a hospital if necessary so the cause of your illness can be determined. There are other illnesses that are much more common than Ebola (such as flu, typhoid fever and malaria) that have similar symptoms in the early stages, so proper medical assessment is really important to ensure you get the right diagnosis and treatment.

If you are taken unwell while at University you should contact the Student Health Service by calling 02070405999. The service is open Monday- Friday 9am-5pm and is located on Level 1 Drysdale Building in the main Northampton Square site.

You can read more about Ebola on the NHS Choices website