



Monday, Mar 27, 2023

EPAPER TODAY'S PAPER

# **The Indian EXPRESS**

JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

Home Explained Political Pulse India Cities Opinion Entertainment Lifestyle Technology Videos Spo

**TRENDING** Daily Crossword Movie Reviews Health Specials Express et al. Express Research UPSC Special

News / Explained / Explained Health / Marburg virus disease outbreak kills five in Tanzania: What is this virus?

# Marburg virus disease outbreak kills five in Tanzania: What is this virus?

Marburg virus disease (MVD), earlier known as Marburg hemorrhagic fever, is a severe, often fatal hemorrhagic fever, according to the WHO. What are its symptoms and treatment? We explain.

By: **Explained Desk**

New Delhi | Updated: March 27, 2023 07:39 IST





EXPRESS PREMIU

'What's your caste works

The cases in Tanzania have come just over a month after another African country, Equatorial Guinea, reported its first case of the Marburg virus disease. (Photo: Twitter/@WHOAFRO)

Five people have died and three others are infected with the Marburg virus – a highly infectious, Ebola-like disease – in Tanzania’s north-west Kagera region, authorities said earlier this week.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), around 161 people have been identified as at risk of infection through contact tracing and are currently being monitored. An emergency response team has been deployed in the area and no other cases of the virus have been reported in the country outside Kagera, *The Guardian* said.

**RECOMMENDED FOR YOU**

**1** How Long Covid affects the careers of top athletes

**2** World TB Day 2023: How India plans to achieve its target of eliminating tuberculosis by 2025

**3** Flu cases rising in India, what is driving the surge?

**Explained Health | H3N2 virus kills 2 in India: What is this virus and how can it be prevented from spreading?**

“The efforts by Tanzania’s health authorities to establish the cause of the disease is a clear indication of the determination to effectively respond to the outbreak. We are working with the government to rapidly scale up control measures to halt the

spread of the virus and end the outbreak as soon as possible,” said Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa, in a statement.

The cases in Tanzania have come just over a month after another African country, Equatorial Guinea, reported its first case of the Marburg virus disease. Local health authorities have **confirmed** seven deaths out of nine cases since February, *Washington Post* reported.

“These emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases are a sign that the health security of the continent needs to be strengthened to cope with the disease threats,” said Ahmed Omgwale Ouma, the director of Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC). “We urge members of the public to continue sharing information in a timely manner with the authorities to enable a most effective response.”

## What is the Marburg virus disease?

Marburg virus disease (MVD), earlier known as Marburg hemorrhagic fever, is a severe, often fatal hemorrhagic fever, according to the WHO.

EXPRESS PREMIU

'What's your caste works

### Best of Explained

---

[As Rahul Gandhi has to leave Lok Sabha, remembering Indira Gandhi's disqualification 48 years ago](#)

[Why transgender female athletes can't compete in female events](#)

[Rural economy indicators: The paradox of robust tractor and dwindling two-wheeler sales](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)

Marburg, like Ebola, is a filovirus; and both diseases are clinically similar.

Rousettus fruit bats are considered the natural hosts for the Marburg virus. However, African green monkeys imported from Uganda were the source of the first human infection, the WHO points out. It was first detected in 1967 after simultaneous outbreaks in Marburg and Frankfurt in Germany; and in Belgrade, Serbia.

The disease has an average fatality rate of around 50%. However, it can be as low as 24% or as high as 88% depending on virus strain and case management, says the WHO.

## What are the symptoms of Marburg virus disease?

After the onset of symptoms, which can begin anytime between two to 21 days, MVD can manifest itself in the form of high fever, muscle aches and severe headache. Around the third day, patients report abdominal pain, vomiting, watery diarrhoea and cramping.

**EXPRESS PREMIU****'What's your  
caste works**

### Also in Explained | Flu cases rising in India, what is driving the surge?

In this phase, the WHO says, the appearance of patients has been often described as "ghost-like" with deep-set eyes, expressionless faces, and extreme lethargy.

Between days five and seven, patients report bleeding from the nose, and gums and blood appearing in vomit and faeces. Severe blood loss leads to death, often between eight to nine days after symptoms begin.

### How can Marburg virus disease be diagnosed and treated?

It is difficult to clinically distinguish MVD from diseases such as malaria, typhoid fever and other viral haemorrhagic fevers. However, it is confirmed by lab testing of samples, which like Coronavirus and Ebola are extreme biohazard risks.

There is no approved antiviral treatment or vaccine for MVD as of now. It can be managed with supportive care. According to the WHO, rehydration with oral or intravenous fluids, and treatment of specific symptoms can help prevent death.

First published on: 26-03-2023 at 14:18 IST



#### NEXT STORY ►

Swiss hat trick hero takes his chance to set up winning start

**TAGS:** Explained Health Express Explained

**Express Premium** Get an Express subscription and do not miss out on these special stories

[SEE MORE >](#)