

Marburg virus death toll up to 114 (Sat 26 Mar, 2005)

WARM-UPS

CHAT: Talk in pairs or groups about viruses/ Angola / the WHO / Ebola / outbreak / diarrhea / fever / headaches / vomiting / monkeys ...Change topic / partner frequently to increase conversation.

VIRUS BRAINSTORM: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'virus'. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

VIRUSES: How safe is the world from a major outbreak? Is your country prepared? Can it handle a sudden pandemic? Are you worried? Talk about this with your partner / group. Use the following prompts to help you:

- Ebola
- SARS
- bird flu
- WHO
- vaccine
- virus
- international travel
- China

OPINIONS: Talk about these with your partner.

- a. Governments panic too much when an outbreak occurs.
- b. A serious pandemic will never seriously affect major world cities.
- c. Governments should more money on finding cures for viruses, especially HIV/AIDS.
- d. A deadly virus will one day kill half the world's population.
- e. There should be better checks at international airports to detect viruses.
- f. Viruses have always been with us.
- g. If the Marburg virus spreads to Portugal, Europe and the whole world will be affected.
- h. Rich countries don't spend money on virus research because most viruses affect people in the developing world.

PRE-READING IDEAS

WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'deadly' and 'virus'.

TRUE FALSE: Guess whether the following statements about the article are true or false:

- a. The German city of Marburg has been hit by a deadly virus. T / F
- b. The WHO predicts the death toll from Marburg virus will rise. T / F
- c. Among the dead is an Italian doctor who had been treating a Marburg patient. T / F
- d. Seventy-five per cent of the fatalities are no older than five. T / F
- e. Marburg virus is related to SARS. T / F
- f. It is transmitted through eating the meat from chickens and pigs. T / F
- g. The vaccine to cure Marburg virus is very expensive. T / F
- h. A quarter of those who contract the virus will die. T / F

SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------|
| (a) outbreak | number |
| (b) border | passed on |
| (c) toll | deaths |
| (d) contain | deadly |
| (e) fatalities | arise |
| (f) transmitted | epidemic |
| (g) fatal | recognized |
| (h) symptoms | stop |
| (i) occur | signs |
| (j) identified | frontier |

PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (a) An outbreak of the | beyond Angola's borders |
| (b) It has taken | toll |
| (c) death | cure |
| (d) Three-quarters of the fatalities | the lives of at least 109 people |
| (e) the virus may spread | identified in 1967 |
| (f) originated | fluids |
| (g) bodily | occur |
| (h) there is no vaccine or | deadly Marburg virus |
| (i) other symptoms | in a similar area |
| (j) The virus was first | are children |

GAP FILL

Marburg virus death toll up to 114

BNE: An _____ of the deadly Marburg virus has reached the Angolan capital, Luanda, and has so far killed 114 people. It has _____ the lives of at least 109 people along the Angola-Congo border and a further five in Luanda. The death toll is expected to rise despite World Health Organization (WHO) attempts to _____ the spread of the virus. Among the dead are a UN Italian doctor, who had been treating a Marburg patient, and a 15-year-old boy, who had traveled to the capital city from the border _____. Three-quarters of the fatalities are children under the age of five. Portugal, which has a large Angolan community, has put its airports on alert fearing the virus may _____ beyond Angola's borders. Angola is an ex-Portuguese colony.

spread *taken* *outbreak* *contain* *region*

The Marburg virus is related to Ebola and _____ in a similar area. It is transmitted through close contact with animals, the bodily fluids of _____ people, or through unprotected sex. The WHO says the disease "can be rapidly fatal" and that there is no _____ or cure for it. The first symptoms include fever, headaches, vomiting and diarrhea. Within a week other _____ occur, such as stomach aches and severe bleeding through the skin and eyes. The fatality rate is around 25 per cent. The virus was first identified in 1967 among laboratory workers in the German city of Marburg who had been working with green monkeys. It has _____ in African countries before in the 1970s and '80's.

symptoms *infected* *struck* *vaccine* *originated*

HOMEWORK

- 1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.
- 2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find information on the Ebola and Marburg viruses. Share your findings with your class next lesson.
- 3. MARBURG:** Create an information poster about Marburg virus. Compare it with your classmates in your next class.
- 4. PANDEMIC PLAN:** You are the head of your town's government. Write an emergency plan on what the citizens should do if Marburg virus hits your region.

DISCUSSION:

- a. What was interesting in this article?
- b. Were you worried by anything in this article?
- c. What do / did you know of this virus?
- d. Are you worried Marburg virus might spread to your country?
- e. Is this something your government should be guarding against?
- f. Did you worry about SARS and bird flu?
- g. Do you worry about AIDS?
- h. Will the world experience a pandemic that will kill millions?
- i. What would you do if a killer virus came to your town?
- j. Is your country prepared for an outbreak?
- k. What will happen if the virus reaches Portugal?
- l. How often do you have fever, headaches, vomiting or diarrhea?
- m. Do you remember the Ebola virus?
- n. Is your body strong?
- o. What did you like best about this discussion?
- p. Teacher / Student additional questions.

TEXT

Marburg virus death toll up to 114

BNE: An **outbreak** of the deadly Marburg virus has reached the Angolan capital, Luanda, and has so far killed 114 people. It has **taken** the lives of at least 109 people along the Angola-Congo border and a further five in Luanda. The death toll is expected to rise despite World Health Organization (WHO) attempts to **contain** the spread of the virus. Among the dead are a UN Italian doctor, who had been treating a Marburg patient, and a 15-year-old boy, who had traveled to the capital city from the border **region**. Three-quarters of the fatalities are children under the age of five. Portugal, which has a large Angolan community, has put its airports on alert fearing the virus may **spread** beyond Angola's borders. Angola is an ex-Portuguese colony.

The Marburg virus is related to Ebola and **originated** in a similar area. It is transmitted through close contact with animals, the bodily fluids of **infected** people, or through unprotected sex. The WHO says the disease "can be rapidly fatal" and that there is no **vaccine** or cure for it. The first symptoms include fever, headaches, vomiting and diarrhea. Within a week other **symptoms** occur, such as stomach aches and severe bleeding through the skin and eyes. The fatality rate is around 25 per cent. The virus was first identified in 1967 among laboratory workers in the German city of Marburg who had been working with green monkeys. It has **struck** in African countries before in the 1970s and '80's.