

## Obama on Ebola: 'We Can't Give in to Hysteria'

**"This is a serious disease, but we can't give in to hysteria or fear," Obama said.**

President Barack Obama on Saturday **urged** Americans to remain calm about the Ebola virus that has thus far been diagnosed in three people in the United States and killed one, emphasizing that **cautious** practices on the part of health authorities as well as aid for the West African countries hardest hit by the disease are the best approaches to preventing it from spreading.

"What we're seeing now is not an **'outbreak'** or an **'epidemic'** of Ebola in America," Obama said in his weekly video address. "This is a serious **disease**, but we can't **give in** to **hysteria** or fear."

"We have to keep this in perspective," Obama continued. "Every year, thousands of Americans die from the flu." The President also pointed out that five people who contracted Ebola in West Africa had been brought back to the U.S. and treated successfully without **infecting** others.

The Ebola outbreak has so far killed 4,500 people in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. Ebola has an incubation period of up to 21 days and is only transmitted by direct contact with the bodily fluids of a person who is already showing symptoms of the disease.

Obama, **warned** against calls by some politicians to **halt** travel between the U.S. and West Africa. Experts have said **cutting off** the border would be ineffective because sick passengers can still take connecting flights through third countries, and it would make it harder to know who was entering the country and perform contact **tracing** if travelers later showed symptoms of the virus.

Obama also argued that stopping travel would halt the flow of health workers to West Africa, where they could help **contain** the disease. "We can't just cut ourselves off from West Africa," Obama said. "Trying to **seal off** an entire region of the world — if that were even possible — could actually make the situation worse."

Adapted from : <http://time.com/3520341/obama-ebola-fear/>

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**1) Reading comprehension questions**

- 1) What was Obama’s main aim in this weekly video address?
- 2) In which part of the world are the majority of victims concentrated?
- 3) Where does the name for the country ‘Liberia’ come from?
- 4) What is the best approach to prevent Ebola from spreading?
- 5) How many people has Ebola killed so far in West African countries?
- 6) What is the incubation period?
- 7) How can Ebola be transmitted?
- 8) What evidence does Obama cite to say that it is not an epidemic?
- 9) Could cutting off the borders help? What do experts say?
- 10) Why would cancelling flights between the USA and West Africa make matters worse?
- 11) Why are health workers necessary?

**2) Match the words in column A with their definitions and synonyms in column B.**

A	B
1) cautious	a) to yield, admit defeat, surrender, give up
2) disease	b) to encourage, to try to persuade, to recommend, to insist
3) epidemic	c) to give advance notice to, especially of danger or possible harm, to advise, to admonish
4) hysteria	d) to stop, cease, come to a stop
5) outbreak	e) sickness
6) to contain	f) to extend or cause to extend over a larger expanse of space or time, to disseminate
7) to cut off	g) a record made by an instrument
8) to give in	h) to contaminate
9) to halt	i) a wild, violent, or uncontrollable emotional behavior, as from fear or grief
10) to infect	j) to remove by cutting, bring to an end
11) to seal off	k) to close, segregate, restrict, separate, isolate
12) to spread	l) careful
13) to urge	m) a sudden, violent, or spontaneous occurrence, especially of disease or strife
14) to warn	n) to keep under proper control, restrain, to prevent or hold back the advance, spread, or influence of something
15) tracing	o) disease, outbreak, plague, pandemic

**3) Look at other uses of the phrasal verbs in the boxes:**

give in	point out	cut off	seal off
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- a) After the last scandal, the mayor gave in to the pressure and resigned.
- b) The children wanted to stay up until midnight, and in the end their mother gave in to their protests.
- c) The tour guide pointed out the historical monuments as the bus drove past them.
- d) He pointed out the mistake in her translation.
- e) While on the net, we were cut off. Our Internet connection was cut off.
- f) The site of the road traffic accident has been sealed off by the police.

**4) Scan the text for examples of the following verbs used to introduce Obama’s speech.**

argue	continue	point out	say	urge	warn
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**5) Try to paraphrase each of the 6 paragraphs in the text so as to provide a short summary (150 words).**

(The name comes from the English word "liberty" and refers to the nation's origin as a colony of free blacks repatriated to Africa from the United States in the early nineteenth century).