

Medics camp in Mityana over Rift Valley fever

By Luke Kagiri

Experts from the health ministry and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have arrived in Mityana district following the reported outbreak of Rift Valley fever.

So far, two people have been confirmed dead; one in Mityana and another in Kiboga district. The first one was a fisherman in Busimbi division in Mityana municipality, who died from Naama Health Centre on November 20.

According to Dennis Mono, the district surveillance officer, results of samples from one of the victims indicated that he had died of Rift Valley fever. A forest ranger in Kiboga district had shown similar symptoms before he died.

The Mityana resident district commissioner, Yahaya Kakooza, yesterday appealed to the residents to co-operate with the surveillance and medical teams in a bid to eradicate the disease.

"Listen and follow what you are told to do such as the precautions to avoid contracting the disease. Although it is dangerous, it can easily be avoided and cured," he said yesterday.

Measures in place

Kakooza said measures are being put in place to ensure residents do not eat meat which has not been checked by veterinary experts.

"All animals must be slaughtered from a gazetted abattoir and meat sold that very day. It is dangerous to eat meat of an animal which was found dead.

The disease is common in southern Africa, especially in communities where animals are reared most. It is also common in Sub-Saharan Africa.

How it is acquired

It can be acquired if one eats meat of an infected animal.

Rift Valley Fever is a highly contagious disease that affects animals and humans, potentially leading to death. It is transmitted through mosquitoes and contact with blood or tissues of infected animals.

The incubation period among humans varies from two to six days. Those infected either experience no detectable symptoms or develop a mild form of the disease characterised by a feverish syndrome with sudden onset of flu-like fever, muscle pain, joint pain and headache.

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FEVER