The Ministry of Health (MoH) in Rwanda has confirmed cases of Marburg virus disease, with several patients exhibiting symptoms such as high fever. The announcement was made on Friday, September 27, 2024, as health authorities continue investigating the source of the outbreak. The ministry stated that infected individuals have been isolated and are currently receiving medical treatment.

In a statement, the MoH explained: “Efforts are underway to trace and identify anyone who may have been in contact with infected individuals, while patients are receiving medical care. The Marburg virus is transmitted through contact with blood or bodily fluids of infected persons and is not spread through the air.”

The Ministry has urged the public to remain vigilant and seek immediate medical attention if they experience symptoms such as high fever, severe headache, vomiting, muscle pain, or abdominal pain. Citizens are advised to contact the Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC) at the toll-free number 114 or visit the nearest health facility for assessment.

At this time, the MoH has not confirmed any fatalities linked to the virus. However, the confirmation follows growing concerns on social media about a potential viral outbreak in the country, which has surfaced amid continued vigilance around the Monkeypox virus.

About the Marburg Virus

The Marburg virus, responsible for causing Marburg Hemorrhagic Fever (MHF), has a case fatality rate of up to 88%. It is closely related to the Ebola virus, and both diseases cause severe viral hemorrhagic fevers. The virus spreads through direct contact with the blood, tissues, or bodily fluids of infected individuals. Symptoms include high fever, headache, vomiting, nausea, and severe muscle pain.

First identified in 1967 in the German cities of Marburg and Frankfurt, as well as Belgrade, Serbia, the virus has since caused outbreaks in several African nations, including Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda.

Most recently, in March 2023, Tanzania’s Ministry of Health declared a Marburg virus outbreak, recording eight confirmed cases, including five fatalities.

The Rwandan Ministry of Health has reiterated that it is actively monitoring the

situation and has launched efforts to trace anyone who may have been exposed to the virus.

What the Public Needs to Know:

- Marburg virus is not airborne but spreads through contact with infected bodily fluids.
- Symptoms to watch for include high fever, headache, vomiting, muscle pain, and abdominal discomfort.
- Anyone experiencing these symptoms is urged to contact the RBC or visit a health facility.

The Ministry will provide further updates as more information becomes available. The public is encouraged to stay informed and follow guidelines to prevent the spread of this deadly disease.