



Ebola Scare Disappearing

With the announcement by the World Health Organization on Monday that Nigeria is now officially free of Ebola infections, followed by the announcement that same day that 43 people who had direct or indirect contact with Liberian national Thomas Eric Duncan were now safely out of quarantine and that the Carnival Magic cruise — dubbed the “Ebola cruise” — had returned to port without incident, caused Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings to confuse his metaphor while making the point: “We are breathing a little easier, but we are still holding our breath.”

Forty-three of the more than 100 people who came into direct or indirect contact with Duncan are now out of quarantine while the rest remain in quarantine until November 7. Mark Rupp, an infectious disease specialist at Nebraska Medical Center (which successfully treated two U.S. Ebola patients after they were infected in Liberia earlier this year), said:



This is a crucial milestone for the city of Dallas and for concerned persons across the United States.

I hope this reinforces the message: the public is safe and that Ebola is not very infectious in its early stages.

Those 43 were closely monitored during their 21-day quarantine period with none of them showing any symptoms of Ebola. Those on the cruise ship, numbering more than 4,000, had their cruise spoiled when they learned that a Dallas lab supervisor who had handled some of Duncan’s blood samples was aboard, turning the cruise into a drama, with passengers using hand sanitizer, avoiding touching public railings, and offering elbow taps instead of handshakes.

The anxiety among those aboard increased when Belize refused to allow the Dallas supervisor to be flown home through its international airport and when Mexico decided to decline letting passengers make a day trip to Cozumel. When a Coast Guard helicopter arrived to pick up a blood sample from the hospital worker, it was greeted by cheers and applause from the ship’s passengers.

In an attempt to diminish further public concerns about the spread of the virus, Anthony Fauci, head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said:

In the United States, two people have gotten infected with Ebola. Two. Both of them were taking care of a desperately ill patient in a risky situation.

You have to distinguish [between] the two nurses ... [and] the risk to the general public who aren’t anywhere near an Ebola patient, much less a very sick Ebola patient.



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 21, 2014

One of Duncan's nurses, Nina Pham, is reported to be in fair condition at a "specialized" but unnamed government hospital near Washington D.C. Fauci declined to speculate on whether she would make a complete recovery, saying only that "She still is a bit knocked out. When you get an infection as serious as Ebola, it is very, very draining on you."

The other nurse, Amber Vinson, is currently being treated at Emory University Health Care in Atlanta, Georgia, but her health status remains unclear.

Confident that the Ebola scare is over, a journalist for the Library of Economics and Liberty, Bryan Caplan, offered to make this bet with anyone reading his blog:

\$100 says that less than 300 people will die of Ebola within the 50 United States by January 1, 2018.

I will make this bet with up to five individuals with sufficient reputation to make payment likely if they lose.

I'm also happy to entertain alternative bets.

At this writing none of his readers has taken him up on it.

The genesis of the Ebola scare began in early September when Duncan, the personal driver for the general manager of Safeway Cargo, a Fed Ex contractor in Liberia, abruptly quit his job. On September 19, Duncan flew from Monrovia to Brussels to Washington and then on to Dallas, arriving there on September 20. On September 24, he began experiencing Ebola's symptoms and went to the Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital emergency room on September 25, where he was diagnosed with a "low-grade, viral disease" and was sent home along with a prescription for some antibiotics.

His symptoms worsened, and on September 28, he was transported back to Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital. On October 7, the hospital reported that his condition was improving, but he died the next morning, the first person in the United States to die from the Ebola virus.

As the Ebola virus scare story disappears from national headlines, it is safe to assume that the mainstream media will now move on to more relevant topics.

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