Experimental Ebola Vaccine Soon to Be Tested on Humans

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Amidst all of the deaths caused by Ebola virus and reported in the news lately, a glimmer of hope surfaces: The National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced it will begin testing an experimental vaccine for the disease as early as September, CNN.com reports.

The announcement came just after the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) raised its travel alert from a level two to a level three warning for Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The CDC urged travelers to avoid regions in West Africa for all non-essential travel.

Since March 1, 2013, a total of 729 people have died of Ebola in those previously mentioned countries and more than 1,300 people have been infected, including two Americans. Officials said that despite their best efforts, it could take months to get the outbreak under control.

Fortunately, the NIH said it has seen incredibly positive results for a new potential Ebola vaccine over the last few years. (Scientists tested the vaccine on primates.)

After news broke about the Ebola outbreak earlier this year, the federal agency has been working with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to fast-track early trials in humans. The results from the tests could come out as early as next year.

At this point, there are no human vaccines for Ebola, a disease that spreads through blood and bodily fluids from infected humans and animals. Many believe this outbreak was spread from the feces of infected fruit bats and was passed to humans via contaminated water and food supplies. Public health officials have called this the worst Ebola outbreak in history.

Since 2013, deadly avian flu outbreaks have also been on the rise all over the world. Click here for more information.

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