

Ebola Virus Disease: From Epidemic To Pandemic: What You Should Know

Thomas Jerome Baker

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Ebola Virus Disease: From Epidemic To Pandemic: What You Should Know Thomas Jerome Baker With news of the first diagnosed case of Ebola in the U.S., the public is on edge and trying to find fast answers about just how vulnerable they are to the deadly virus. This book provides answers from the most reliable and the most authoritative sources possible. The sources are from a wide variety of perspectives: social, cultural, political, economic, health and medical. (quote) U. S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power: "Ebola has no greater friend than fear. The virus thrives on it. We see fear in the affected countries... It is fear that leads community members to stigmatize survivors of the virus, or the relatives of those who have died, or even the health professionals and other people aiding in the response... A 24-yearold survivor in Guinea told me she had lived three lives: her life before Ebola; her life in the hell of her infection; and her life since recovering. She said the stigma she has suffered since beating Ebola has made her current life the hardest. The stigma had so affected her that she said she was amazed by President Obama's embrace of Nina Pham, the Texas nurse who was just cured of Ebola. When I went to give this young woman survivor a hug goodbye, though, she demurred and offered a fist bump. She did not seem yet to fully trust that she was cured or to recognize that she had done nothing wrong - only the virus had... It is fear that has caused some of those who develop a fever or other symptoms not to come forward to seek help, putting themselves and the people around them at greater risk. Fear that going to seek care will make them sicker, or that seeking help will alienate them from their communities... We also see fear in countries like my own (USA), whose active participation is critically important to bringing this outbreak under control. All over the world, governments and our fellow citizens are afraid that if we send doctors or nurses or soldiers or engineers or other volunteers to the affected countries, we will put our own communities at risk... The fear is understandable. Many of our countries, like those most affected, are dealing with Ebola for the first time, and it is a dangerous and terrifying virus... We must ask ourselves: twenty years from now, when we look back on this historic crossroads, will we want to say we left this fight to the people of the affected countries? Will we want to say we did not act because we thought others would win the fight without our help? Will we want to admit that fear held us back? If we will not want to give these answers when we are asked in twenty years - and make no mistake, we will all be asked - we have to do more."

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