

Plague deaths rise to nearly 200 as outbreak grows in Madagascar

A serious outbreak of the plague is threatening residents and tourists in Madagascar

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports more than 2,000 confirmed or suspected cases and that the death toll has reached 195 as of this week.

The WHO expects that number to rise through April 2018, but does say that the threat of the disease's spread seems to be decreasing.

While the plague, once known as the Black Death, is not the deadly threat it was centuries or even decades ago, some experts have worry the disease could become resistant to antibiotics.

Despite the slowdown in known infections, the threat level for Madagascar remains high.

In a plague outbreak update published on November 15, the WHO said it would be "scaling up of preparedness and operational readiness activities in neighboring Indian Ocean islands and other southern and east African countries."

Among them are the Seychelles, Kenya, South Africa, and Tanzania.

"The overall global risk is considered to be low. WHO is re-evaluating the risk assessment based on the evolution of the outbreak and information from response activities," the organization also notes.

Travelers to Madagascar are advised to avoid contact with dead animals, protect themselves against flea bites, and stay out of the proximity of patients suffering from pneumonic plague.

People who present with symptoms including shortness of breath with coughing and/or blood-tainted sputum, swollen lymph nodes, chills, and fever should seek immediate medical attention.

Source: <https://www.aol.com/article/news/2017/11/25/plague-deaths-rise-to-nearly-200-as-outbreak-grows-in-madagascar/23286923/>

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