

Argentina Discovers How to Diagnose Ebola Patients within 24 Hours



Buenos Aires, October 11 (teleSUR-RHC)-- The Argentinian Health Ministry announced that it has developed a method for fast diagnosis of the Ebola virus, which could help reduce the risk from spreading to other individuals, according to media reports on Friday.

Using a molecular biological method, the Malbran Institute, a state-run research body, discovered how it can detect the virus in a patient within 24 hours. Specialists designed a “primer” that, when added to a patient's blood or urine sample, allows the genome of the Ebola virus to multiply if it is present – thus making it easier to detect and discard or confirm cases. The faster a case can be confirmed, the easier the virus can be contained and potentially cured.

The center used genetic material of the virus send from the World Health Organization (WHO) to develop this “primer,” which is the first of its type in Latin America.

"Argentina is the first country in Latin America to find a diagnosis for Ebola. It was passed through a WHO reference center that validated the technique works because it tested positive samples containing the RNA virus," said Health Minister Juan Manzur.

Jaime Lazovski, Deputy Health Minister, said the early detection method has already been used successfully to test five different patients who were showing symptoms of Ebola and had recently returned from Nigeria. The patients, including four Argentinians and one Chinese, were all found to be “false alarms,” the official said.

According to Lazovski, there are three hospitals in the country ready to face Ebola cases, however the Ministry is working on strengthening its health services including training staff, purchasing equipment for patient isolation and developing a protocol to handle positive cases.

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