

Viral haemorrhagic fevers are a group of illnesses caused by several distinct families of viruses: arenaviruses, filoviruses, bunyaviruses and flaviviruses.

Some of these cause relatively mild illnesses, whilst others can cause severe, life-threatening disease; some are high consequence infectious diseases (HCIDs).

The viruses depend on their animal hosts for survival, so they are usually restricted to the geographical area inhabited by those animals.

The viruses are endemic in areas of Africa, South America and Asia, with some present in parts of Europe.

Arenaviruses

Known arenaviruses include:

- [Lassa virus](#): the cause of Lassa fever, endemic in parts of west Africa

Filoviruses

Known filoviruses include:

- [Ebola](#) and [Marburg](#) viruses which cause the most severe forms of haemorrhagic fever.

Bunyaviruses

Known bunyaviruses include:

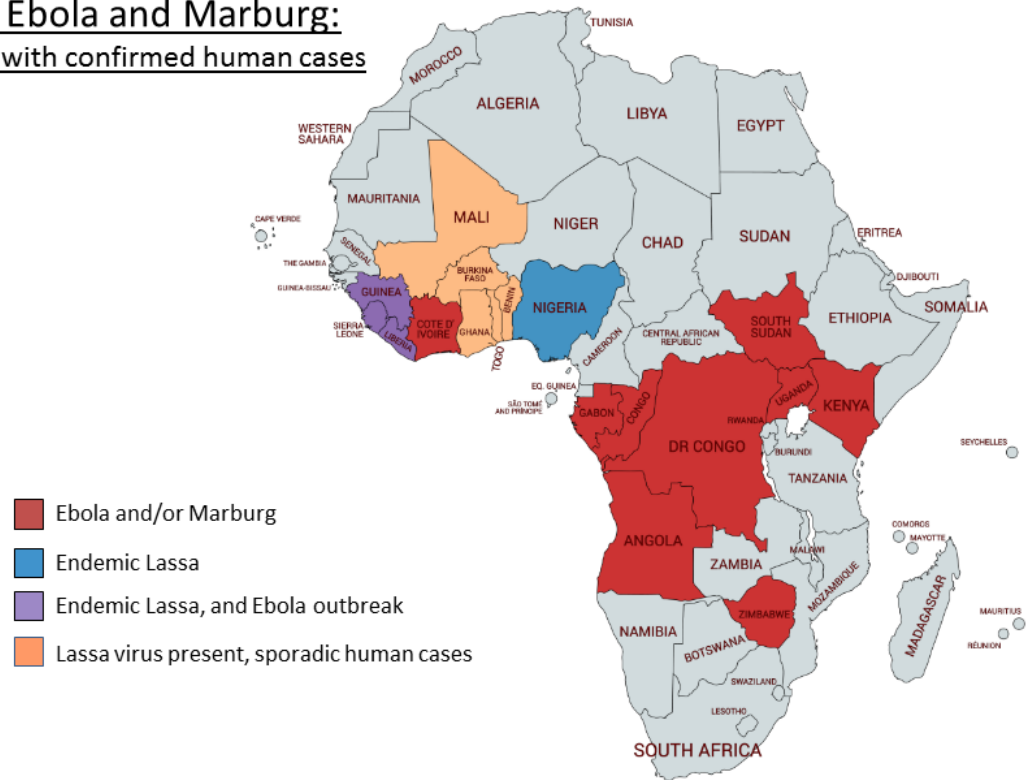
- [Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever virus \(CCHF\)](#)
- Hantaviruses, which cause [haemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome and Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome](#)
- Rift Valley fever virus, which causes [Rift Valley fever](#)

Flaviviruses

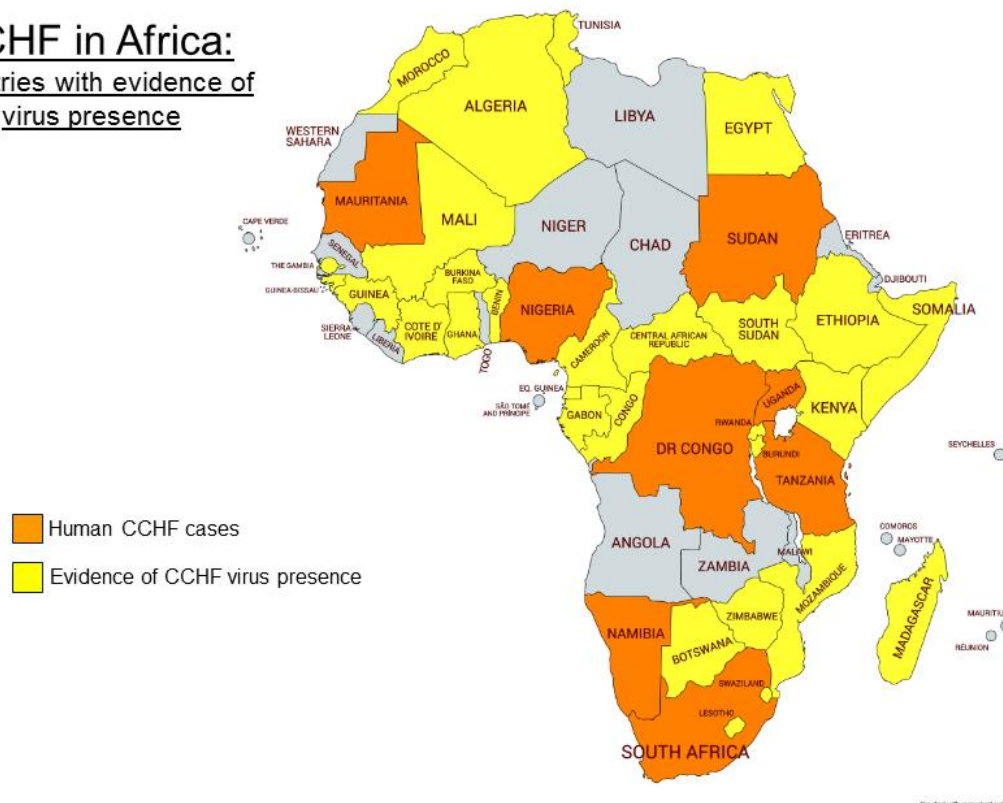
Known flaviruses include:

- Alkhurma virus (Saudi Arabia)
- dengue virus: the cause of [dengue haemorrhagic fever and dengue fever](#)
- Kyasanur Forest virus (India, Karnataka State)
- Omsk virus (Siberia)
- yellow fever virus: the cause of [yellow fever](#)

Lassa, Ebola and Marburg: Countries with confirmed human cases



CCHF in Africa:
Countries with evidence of
virus presence



WHO MAP SHOWING CCHF distribution

Human cases or outbreaks of viral haemorrhagic fever occur sporadically and irregularly, and are hard to predict.

Occasionally, humans may acquire infection from animal hosts that have been exported from their native habitats, as occurred when laboratory workers in Germany handled imported monkeys infected with Marburg virus.

Environmental conditions in England and Wales do not support the natural reservoirs of infection.