NEBRASKA BIOCONTAINMENT UNIT

Nebraska Medicine, University of Nebraska Medical Center and Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

UNIT FUNCTION AND CAPABILITIES

The Nebraska Biocontainment Unit (NBU) is a secured area with a highly trained staff of medical and nursing personnel who safely provide all levels of care to patients infected with deadly infectious diseases.

Other features include:

- Negative air flow with greater than 15 air exchanges per hour
- High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) air filtration system
- Secured access, double door air lock main entrance
- Separate staff entrance and exit
- Staff decontamination shower
- Pass-through sterilizer to disinfect materials leaving the unit
- Dual autoclave for decontamination of waste and linens
- Satellite laboratory located within the NBU
- Secure telehealth system
- Close proximity to the Nebraska Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) BSL III Lab

Contact us: nbu@nebraskamed.com
Providing care for patients with hazardous infectious diseases, the biocontainment unit is an environment that maximizes the safety for staff and the community at large. A full spectrum of care is provided – from quarantine to intensive care treatment – for patients of all ages. The unit is designed to provide care for patients with highly infectious diseases such as Ebola virus, smallpox, and respiratory diseases such as avian influenza, whether acquired in a laboratory accident, as a naturally occurring infection, or in a bioterrorist attack.

The Nebraska Biocontainment Unit (NBU) is a collaborative project involving Nebraska Medicine, University of Nebraska Medical Center and Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. It is one of only a few biocontainment units in the United States and is the largest, with up to a 10-bed capacity depending on the specific infection. In addition to providing medical care for patients with hazardous diseases, the unit also has active research and outreach training programs for the region and the nation.

Unit personnel consist of a highly trained staff of physicians, nurses, technicians and respiratory therapists who have special training in high level isolation and biopreparedness. They work full-time in other areas of Nebraska Medicine but remain on call to report promptly for duty when the unit is activated.

The NBU was one of three units in the U.S. selected in 2014 to receive U.S. citizens with Ebola virus disease who were medically evacuated from Africa. The outstanding staff of the NBU has received many awards for its safe and courageous care of three Ebola patients in the fall of 2014, including being honored as “Midlanders of the Year” for 2014 by the Omaha World Herald, and recognized by the White House and the Nebraska Legislature.

The Nebraska Biocontainment Unit was dedicated by Julie Gerberding, MD, of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2005. In the event of a public health threat, the unit may be activated by Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and the NBU medical director.

THE NEBRASKA BIOCONTAINMENT UNIT WAS ONE OF THREE UNITS SELECTED TO CARE FOR UNITED STATES CITIZENS WITH EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE MEDICALLY EVACUATED FROM AFRICA.