

Ebola lapses show lab safety protocols should factor in human error

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Los Angeles Times:

Christmas Eve brought the unwelcome news that a lab worker at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention may have been exposed to the Ebola virus. It was the latest in a series of similar lapses. Citing such problems, the Obama administration in October suspended some government-funded research projects involving genetic modification of viruses that have the potential to set off a worldwide epidemic. The lapses reported so far have not involved serious injuries or fatalities. But is the lack of serious harm evidence that current safety measures are effective, or are the lapses early warning signs of systemic problems?

The recent Ebola exposure at the CDC occurred just four days after a **symposium** on lab safety at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington. A broad cross section of experts, including me, assembled to ponder such questions, to debate the risks and benefits of the suspended research and to begin to discuss how to implement and enforce risk assessments of laboratory processes.

Read the whole story: [*Los Angeles Times*](#)