

Ebola Will Not Infect the Markets

In recent weeks, several clients have asked for our opinion on what, if any, impact Ebola will have on the U.S. stock market. The media has stirred the pot and made the average person feel on edge about what is happening here and abroad. As usual, I think this is a complete disservice to anyone watching or reading these reports. While Ebola is a very deadly virus, let me put this all into perspective. Hopefully this will quell your nerves.

- Two people have contracted Ebola in the United States as a result of an infected foreign citizen flying to Dallas. His treatment was subpar at best and he died as a result. Due to a lack of proper protocol, he spread the disease to two nurses.
- While Ebola has a very high mortality rate, it is not easy to contract the disease. You need to be in direct contact with the bodily fluids of someone showing signs of Ebola. As a result, the virus is spread dramatically slower than airborne viruses.
- Tragically, over 4,000 people worldwide have died of this disease. However, statistically speaking, this is a very low number. While Ebola is still spreading in western Africa, it seems to be under control here in the United States. As a frame of reference, I have collected data on various causes of death.
 - 1.3 million people died worldwide from tuberculosis in 2012
 - 1 million people die worldwide from malaria each year
 - 216,000 people die worldwide from typhoid fever each year
 - 120,000 people died worldwide from measles in 2012
 - In the United states, over 30,000 people die in car accidents each year
 - In the United States, over 30,000 people die from gun shots each year
 - At its peak, AIDS was killing 40,000 Americans per year and a total of 25 million have died since the early 1980s worldwide
 - Lightning strikes kill an estimated 25,000 people worldwide each year

While I am not trying to downplay the crisis in western Africa, it has had no direct effect on the global stock markets. If not controlled, Ebola could pose a more serious threat, but at the moment it is just a tragic news story.

I hope this has helped you put this tragic health crisis into perspective. As always I welcome your questions and comments.



Sincerely,

Jeff