



TULAREMIA

- What is TULAREMIA?** Tularemia is a highly infectious bacterial disease found in many animals, especially rabbits and rodents. It is commonly referred to as “rabbit fever.” Tularemia occurs in all parts of the United States and in all months of the year. Occurrence of the disease may be higher in adults in early winter during rabbit hunting season and in children during the summer when ticks and deer flies are plentiful.
- Transmission:** Not transmitted from person to person. People usually get the disease after being bitten by an infected tick, deerfly, or other insect; handling infected animal carcasses; eating or drinking contaminated meat or water; or inhaling airborne bacteria.
- Signs and symptoms:** Within one to 14 days of exposure, the person may develop a skin ulcer at the site where the infection entered the body and other symptoms including swollen lymph nodes, fever, headache, muscle aches, joint pain, dry cough, and weakness. Swallowing the bacteria may produce sore throat, stomach pain, diarrhea, and vomiting. If you breathe in the bacteria, you could develop pneumonia. People with pneumonia can have chest pain, difficulty breathing, and bloody sputum.
- Treatment:** Antibiotics.
- Diagnosis:** Laboratory testing.
- What can you do?** Wear gloves while handling animal skins or raw animal products and wash your hands afterwards. The bacteria are easy to kill using heat (cooking meat thoroughly), disinfectants, and/or bleach.
- Whom do you call?** Division of Public Health, Office of Infectious Disease Epidemiology: 1-888-295-5156.
- Additional information:** Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: www.cdc.gov/tularemia/faq/.

Emergency Medical Services and Preparedness Section
24/7 Emergency Contact Number: 1-888-295-5156
Contact Number: 302-223-2999

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