



Tularemia

(PUBLIC HANDOUT)

What is Tularemia?

Tularemia, also known as “rabbit fever,” is a disease caused by a bacterium. Tularemia is typically found in animals, especially rodents and rabbits. Tularemia is usually a rural disease and has been reported in all U.S. states except Hawaii.

Nearly all cases occur in rural areas, and are caused by the bites of ticks and biting flies or from handling infected rodents and rabbits. Cases also resulted from inhaling airborne bacteria and from laboratory accidents.

What are the symptoms of Tularemia?

The symptoms depend on how people are exposed to Tularemia. Possible symptoms include:

- Skin ulcers
- Swollen and painful lymph glands
- Inflamed eyes
- Sore throat
- Mouth sores
- Diarrhea
- Pneumonia

If the bacterium is inhaled, symptoms can include sudden onset of fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, joint pain, dry cough, and progressive weakness. People with pneumonia can develop chest pain, difficulty breathing, bloody mucus from the lungs, and respiratory failure.

Tularemia can be fatal if it is not treated appropriately with antibiotics.

Can someone become infected with the Tularemia bacteria from another person?

People have not been known to transmit the infection to others, so infected persons do not need to be isolated.

How is Tularemia diagnosed?

When Tularemia is suspected, the healthcare provider collects specimens, such as blood or mucus from the lungs, for testing in a laboratory.

Can Tularemia be effectively treated with antibiotics?

Several kinds of antibiotics can cure Tularemia. Some antibiotics come in pill form. Some must be injected or given intravenously.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY
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309 Buck St.
Millville, NJ 08332



SALEM COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
98 Market Street
Salem, NJ 08079

www.cshealth.org

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Is a vaccine available?

A vaccine for Tularemia is not currently available in the U.S.

Where can I get more information?

Your healthcare provider

- Your local department of health
- The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services

--Website – www.nj.gov/health

--DHSS Communicable Disease Service at (609) 588-7500

- CDC

--www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/Tularemia

--1-800-CDC-INFO (4636) for assistance in English and Spanish – TTY 1-888-232-6348

--E-mail: cdcinfo@cdc.gov