

PREVENTION

Rodent-proof house, shop and barns

- Seal holes and cracks with steel wool, metal sheeting, hardware cloth, or patching plaster. Insure weather seals under doors are tight and screens are in good repair

Eliminate food sources

- Store pet food, and feed in metal containers
- Feed animals only as much as they will eat, and only during the day
- Clean up spilled feed and seed
- Clean dishes and sweep floor daily
- Keep tight lids on garbage containers

Limit nesting sites

- Remove clutter, junk, brush and wood piles, abandoned vehicles, and construction materials
- Store hay, woodpiles and equipment 100 feet from buildings
- Store firewood up and off the ground

Practice continuous rodent control

- Use snap-traps baited with peanut butter/oatmeal mix indoors
- Use snap-traps, multi-catch traps or poison outdoors
- Use rubber gloves when handling carcasses. Place carcass in a plastic bag and deposit in outdoor trash
- Encourage natural predators (hawks, owls, foxes, etc.)



CLEANING PRECAUTIONS

When cleaning rodent-infested buildings the following precautions should be used.

- Use a disinfectant solution of bleach and water (1 cup bleach per gallon of water).
- Wear rubber gloves.
- Open doors and windows and allow the interior to air out for at least 30 minutes before cleaning or working inside.
- Spray droppings, nest material and carcasses with the disinfectant and let soak for 5 to 10 minutes before cleaning up with a mop, sponge or wet-vacuum. **DO NOT SWEEP OR DRY VACUUM RODENT DROPPINGS!**
- To dispose of the dead mouse or contaminated materials, disinfect as described, seal in a plastic bag and place in an outdoor trash can.
- If the building is heavily infested or complete ventilation is not possible, use a respirator. The respirator should seal tightly to the face and be equipped with a HEPA filter (N-100 NIOSH rating).



Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome



Deer Mouse

www.health.mesacounty.us

Information lines:
English: 970-248-6969

HANTAVIRUS PULMONARY SYNDROME IS A RARE DISEASE

Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS) is caused by a virus that is carried primarily by deer mice, which are characterized by their color - brown on top and white underneath and by their large ears. The infected rodents excrete the virus in their urine, droppings and saliva. These droppings contaminate dirt and dust. People are infected by inhaling airborne particles of the virus or by direct contact with rodents, their droppings or nests.

Although hantavirus is rare, it is fatal in roughly 40% of cases.

INCUBATION PERIOD

From the time you are exposed to the time until symptoms appear (incubation period) can vary from one to six weeks. Typically symptoms appear on the average of about two to three weeks after exposure.



SYMPTOMS

Early symptoms are much like the flu and include fever, chills, headache, and severe muscle pain, especially in the lower back and legs. There is severe abdominal, joint and back pain, and possibly, nausea and vomiting.

Within 1-5 days after symptoms start, a person will develop a cough, shortness of breath and difficulty breathing due to fluid build-up in the lungs. This can quickly progress to respiratory failure and is life-threatening.

Sore throat, runny nose, watery eyes, sneezing and rashes are rarely seen. These symptoms would suggest the illness is due to some other cause.

WHO'S AT RISK?

- People who live, work or visit rural areas
- People who are exposed to large numbers of rodents
- People who clean barns, outbuildings, or grain storage areas; or who clear shrubbery, plants, and garden

TREATMENT

Currently there is no effective drug treatment for HPS. When HPS infection is suspected or confirmed, early admission to a hospital where careful monitoring, treatment of symptoms, and good supportive therapy can be provided is important. If you have had exposure to rodents and experience the symptoms mentioned, tell your physician about your exposure. A quick diagnosis helps the physician appropriately manage your care.



PREVENTION IS THE KEY TO AVOIDING HANTAVIRUS