

Living with...Hantavirus, Plague, and West Nile Virus



Hantavirus:

How contracted: through contact with urine, feces or saliva from an infected rodent – breathing contaminated dust is most common form of transmission. Incubation 2-6 weeks from exposure.

Not Contagious - and typically not transmitted by dogs or cats that catch and eat rodents

Precautions: Rodent control in and around the home is the primary strategy for preventing hantavirus infection. Remember: **Seal up, Trap up, Clean up**

Seal Up holes inside and outside the home to prevent entry by rodents. **Trap Up** - Trap rodents around the home to reduce population. Choose an appropriate snap trap (don't use live traps.) When setting or emptying trap, use precautions (i.e. gloves and disinfectant.) **Clean Up** - Take precautions before and while cleaning rodent-infested areas. Before cleaning a space, ventilate the area by opening the doors and windows for at least 30 minutes. Use cross-ventilation and leave the area during the airing-out period. When you begin cleaning, do not stir up dust by sweeping or vacuuming up droppings, urine, or nesting materials. Wear rubber, latex, vinyl gloves when cleaning urine and droppings. Spray the urine and droppings with a disinfectant or a mixture of bleach and water (1 part bleach to 10 parts water) and let soak 5 minutes.

Resources: 24 hour HOTLINE 303-692-2667; Infoline 385-4636, x2224

Website: www.sjbhd.org or www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hanta/hps/index.htm



Plague:

How contracted: transmitted thru flea bites (and possibly scratches from infected animals such as house cat). Incubation in humans: 2-6 days

NOT Contagious – this type of plague is not transferable to other people unless develops into pneumonic plague

Precautions:

- Do **not** feed, catch, attempt to play with or entice any rodent or rabbit species onto your property
- Avoid contact with all sick and dead rodents and rabbits.
- While hiking, treat pants, socks, shoe tops, arms and legs with insect repellent.
- Insecticide flea treatment should be used on cats and dogs.
(effectiveness of flea-repellent collars has not been proven)

Website: www.sjbhd.org or www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/plague/index.htm



West Nile Virus:

How contracted: transmitted through mosquito bites.

NOT Contagious; incubation period in humans - usually 3-14 days

Precautions:

- **Eliminate ways mosquitoes can get to you** (i.e. install or repair screens; staying inside at dawn and dusk) and protect you and your family by wearing long sleeved shirts and long pants when possible or applying insect repellent. A higher percentage of an active ingredient (such as DEET) doesn't give you better protection – it means it will last longer. *Choose a repellent that provides protection for amount of time you'll be outdoors.* For more specifics including alternatives to DEET, check out: www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/qa/insect_repellent.htm
- **Eliminate places mosquitos can breed** (ie. get rid of standing water - or throw mosquito dunks in or other larvacide)

Resources: state toll-free helpline: 1-877-462-2911 (staffed 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.)

Website: www.fightthebitecolorado.com