



**Hantavirus Information Paper
Preventive Medicine Department
Evans Army Community Hospital
Fort Carson, Colorado**



9 JUNE 2011

Hantavirus: Hantavirus is carried by rodents, especially deer mice. The virus is found in their urine and feces, but it does not make the animal sick.

Reported cases in Southern Colorado 2010-2011:

Two reported Hantavirus cases in Colorado in 2011, with one death. Both cases were women in their 20s. In 2010, there were five reported Hantavirus cases with three deaths. Colorado averages about four cases a year.

Hantavirus Cases at Fort Carson: To date, no cases have been reported on Fort Carson. However, deer mice, the primary carrier of Hantavirus, are common on Fort Carson.

Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS): HPS is a serious respiratory disease carried by certain wild rodents, mainly deer mice, and is passed to humans through contact with a rodent's infected urine, droppings, or saliva. Breathing in contaminated dust is the most common form of transmission. Rodent infestation in and around the home and outdoor storage remains the primary risk for Hantavirus exposure. There are no documented cases of person-to-person transmission in North America.

Hantavirus Symptoms: Early symptoms include fever, headache, and muscle pain, severe abdominal, joint and lower back pain, nausea, and vomiting. A cough and shortness of breath usually develops 1 to 5 days after onset of symptoms. The primary symptom of HPS is difficulty breathing due to fluid build-up in the lungs. This can quickly progress to respiratory failure. The incubation period varies, but ranges from 1-6 weeks, with an average of 2-3 weeks.

Prevention: Areas contaminated by rodent feces or areas that are rarely cleaned (i.e. behind the refrigerator or washer), should first be dampened with a bleach disinfectant (one part household bleach plus nine parts water, i.e. 100 ml bleach plus 900 ml water or 7 Tablespoons bleach to 3 ¾ cups of water). Remove droppings and clean area by damp mopping after dampening the area with the bleach disinfectant. This practice will keep mouse urine and feces from aerosolizing. Additionally, wear plastic or rubber gloves as well as full-length clothing during clean-up. After removal of gloves, ensure to wash hands and lower arms, as well as washing your face and laundering your clothes.

Hantavirus Testing: Detection of hantavirus-specific immunoglobulin M or rising titers of hantavirus-specific immunoglobulin G, or detection of hantavirus-specific ribonucleic acid by polymerase chain reaction in clinical specimens, or detection of hantavirus antigen by immunohistochemistry.

Request Pest Control or for More Information:

For on post housing the service order desk number for Balfour Beatty is (719) 579-1605.

For Evans Army Community Hospital issues or for more information please contact Environmental Health at (719) 526-7922.