



How can I prevent Tularemia?

- Use insect repellent containing DEET on your skin to prevent insect bites,
- Wash your hand often using soap and warm water, especially after handling animal carcasses,
- Be sure to cook your food thoroughly, and
- Ensure that your drinking water is from a safe source.



Can Tularemia be used as a weapon?

Francisella tularensis is very infectious. A small number (10-50 or so organisms) can cause disease. If *F. tularensis* were used as a weapon, the bacteria would likely be made airborne for exposure by inhalation. People who inhale an infectious aerosol would generally experience severe respiratory illness, including life-threatening pneumonia and systemic infection, if they are not treated. The bacteria that cause tularemia occur widely in nature and could be isolated and grown in quantity in a laboratory, although manufacturing an effective aerosol weapon would require considerable sophistication.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Local Resources

For information on Tularemia visit our website at:

<http://www.tulsa-health.org/community-health/epidemiology/>

or write:

Tulsa Health Department
Planning & Epidemiology
5051 S. 129th E. Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74134

Other Contact Information:

Phone: 918/595-4505

Fax: 918/595-4588

E-mail: epidemiology@tulsa-health.org

For more information on Tularemia, visit:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
404-639-3311
Public Inquiries: 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636)
<http://www.cdc.gov>



**TULSA HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Prepared by Planning & Epidemiology



Tularemia

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) classifies agents with recognized bioterrorism potential into three priority areas (A, B, and C). Tularemia is classified as a Category A agent. Category A agents are those that:

- pose the greatest possible threat for a bad effect on public health,
- may spread across a large area or need public awareness, and
- need a great deal of planning to protect the public's health.

In the U.S., most cases associated are associated with rabbits/hares (winter) and ticks (summer). There are about 200 cases reported in the United States a year.



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Tularemia



What is Tularemia?

Tularemia (Rabbit Fever) is a potentially serious illness that occurs naturally in the U.S. It is caused by the bacterium *Francisella tularensis*, which is found in animals (especially rodents, rabbits, and hares).

How does Tularemia spread?

Tularemia can be spread by:

- Being bitten by an infected tick, deerfly or other insect,
- Handling infected animal carcasses,
- Eating or drinking contaminated food or water, or
- Breathing in the bacteria, *F. tularensis*.



A brown dog tick which has been associated with tularemia.

There is no need to isolate people with tularemia because tularemia does not spread from person to person.

What are the symptoms of Tularemia?

- Sudden fever
- Chills
- Headaches
- Diarrhea
- Muscle aches
- Joint pain
- Dry cough
- Progressive weakness

People can also catch pneumonia and develop chest pain and bloody sputum. They can have trouble breathing and sometimes even stop breathing.

Other symptoms of tularemia depend on how a person was exposed to the tularemia bacteria. These symptoms can include:

- ulcers on the skin or mouth,
- swollen and painful lymph glands,
- swollen and painful eyes, and
- a sore throat.



Tularemia lesion on a hand

How soon do symptoms appear?

- Symptoms usually appear 3 to 5 days after exposure.
- Can take as long as 14 days.

What should I do if I think I have Tularemia?

Consult your doctor at the first sign of illness. Be sure to let the doctor know if you are pregnant or have a weakened immune system. People who have been exposed to the tularemia bacteria should be treated as soon as possible. The disease can be fatal if it is not treated with the right antibiotics.

How is Tularemia treated?

Your doctor will most likely prescribe antibiotics, which must be taken according to the directions supplied with your prescription to ensure the best possible result. Let your doctor know if you have any allergy to antibiotics.

Is there a vaccine for Tularemia?

A vaccine for tularemia is under review by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and is not currently available in the U.S.