



HANTAVIRUS PULMONARY SYNDROME

WHAT ARE HANTAVIRUSES?

HANTAVIRUSES ARE VIRUSES FOUND IN RODENTS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD. STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT MICE ARE OFTEN INFECTED AND APPEAR TO BE THE SOURCE OF INFECTION.

IS THIS ILLNESS COMMON TO HUMANS?

NO. HUMAN HANTAVIRUS INFECTIONS ARE RARE.

HOW IS THE VIRUS TRANSMITTED?

RODENTS SUCH AS MICE THAT ARE FOUND THROUGHOUT NORTH AMERICA CARRY THE VIRUS. INFECTED RODENTS SHED THE LIVE VIRUS IN SALIVA, DROPPINGS AND URINE. HUMANS ARE INFECTED WHEN THEY INHALE PARTICLES THAT CONTAIN VIRUSES FROM RODENT URINE OR DROPPINGS.

CAN PEOPLE INFECT EACH OTHER?

SPREADING THE DISEASE PERSON-TO-PERSON DOES NOT HAPPEN.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE HIGH FEVER, MUSCLE ACHES, COUGH AND HEADACHE. AFTER SEVERAL DAYS, RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS WORSEN AND THE LUNGS MAY FILL WITH FLUID AND VICTIMS MAY DIE OF RESPIRATORY FAILURE OR SHOCK.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO DEVELOP SYMPTOMS?

SYMPTOMS OCCUR TWO TO FOUR WEEKS, BUT MAY RANGE FROM A FEW DAYS UP TO TWO MONTHS AFTER INFECTION.

IS THERE ANY TREATMENT?

THERE IS NO SPECIFIC TREATMENT FOR HANTAVIRUS.

IS THE DISEASE ALWAYS FATAL?

NO. SUPPORTIVE TREATMENT HAS IMPROVED SURVIVAL.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT EXPOSURE TO HANTAVIRUS?

AVOID CONTACT WITH RODENT DROPPINGS OR URINE. TO REDUCE INFECTION TO HANTAVIRUS AROUND THE HOME, PREVENT OR ELIMINATE RODENT INFESTATIONS.