

HANTAVIRUS



The UNWANTED InvaderHANTAVIRUS

The winter's cold weather and abundance of food waste may bring to your home an unwanted invader more dangerous than you might think. We refer to the rodents who are seeking for food and refuge in the homes, and can transmit: **Hantavirus**.

Hantavirus is a serious respiratory disease that is caused by a virus that is spread from rodents to humans, especially deer mice. People can get hantavirus when they touch rodent urine, droppings, or places where these animals have nested. Dried droppings or urine can be stirred up in dust and breathed in by people. The Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS), can begin with symptoms similar to the flu. The first symptoms are fever, muscle pain, and being tired. This happens 1 to 3 weeks after a person is exposed to hantavirus. Some people also get headaches, dizziness, vomiting, or diarrhea. After about 4 to 10 days, people who are sick with hantavirus infection begin to cough and have shortness of breath. If someone is sick with hantavirus pulmonary syndrome and does not get help quickly, he or she may die.

Children infected with hantavirus can develop severe illness, similar to adults.

2 CASES of Children with HANTAVIRUS

CASE 1> On May 09, a boy aged 6 years who lived in Colorado went to a Texas hospital with a 2-day history of diarrhea and shortness of breath. On initial examination, the child had bluish lips and nail beds, with cold extremities. His pulse was 163, and his temperature was 101°F (38.3°C). Soon after arrival at the hospital, the child became with problem for breathing and had no palpable pulse. Chest compressions were initiated, and the child was intubated and ventilated. Within 2 hours of admission to the hospital, the boy died from apparent cardiac failure secondary to shock.



An environmental assessment conducted by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment at the boy's home in Colorado found rodent droppings and nesting materials under his bed and in bushes in front of the home where the boy had played.

CASE 2 > On November 09, an adolescent boy aged 13 years went to a California emergency department with a 5-day history of fever with a maximum 102.6°F [39.2°C], cough, posttussive vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain. Physical examination revealed a tender chest, with crackles and diminished breath sounds in the lower lobes of the lungs, and a respiratory rate of 30. There was laboratory testing and chest radiographs. Treatment included intravenous fluids, medications and supplemental oxygen. The patient was discharged after 5 days of hospitalization

Testing for hantavirus was requested on day 4 of hospitalization. Extensive remodeling was under way in the youth's home at the time of illness, including removal and replacement of floors and walls. Three mice were trapped in the youth's kitchen and garage approximately 3 months before disease onset, but the patient had no known direct or indirect contact with the rodents.

The patients in this article had evidence of rodents in and around their homes. Source: Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Document: Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome in Five Pediatric Patients

You Can Minimize the RISK ♦♦♦

Keep your kitchen clean. Wash dishes. Keep clean the floor and counters. Store food and dispose garbage in containers with tight-fitting lids.

♦ OUTSIDE

- Clear brush and grass from around foundation. Locate woodpiles, and garbage cans at least 100 feet from house.
- Store all animal feed in containers with lids. Discard excess pet food and pet water bowls in the evening.
- Seal exterior holes and cracks 1/4 inch or larger in size.

♦ SAFETY PRECAUTIONS IF YOU FIND DROPPINGS

- Eliminate rodent infestations immediately.
- Wear rubber gloves.
- Don't sweep or vacuum
- Use rubber gloves. Spray a 10 percent bleach solution (2 tablespoons bleach to 1 cup of water) onto dead rodents, rodent droppings, nests, contaminated traps, and surrounding areas and let the disinfectant stand for at least 15 minutes before cleaning. Clean with a sponge or a mop.
- Place dead animals, debris and all what you have used into two plastic bags, seal them and discard in the trash.



To learn more about Hantavirus please call (858)694-2888 or visit our Web site at: www.SDVector.com