

# Hantavirus Fact Sheet

## What is it?

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Hantavirus is a rare germ that can be deadly. It comes from sick rodents, like mice and rats, not people. In the United States, one rodent that is known to carry Hantavirus germs is the deer mouse.



## How does it spread?

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Rodents can carry Hantavirus germs in their urine (pee), droppings (poop), and saliva. You can get this virus if you breathe in air filled with Hantavirus germs. These germs can get into the air when rodent urine, droppings, and nesting materials are moved around.

You can also catch this disease if you:

- Eat food that has touched a sick rodent's pee, poop, or saliva.
- Touch something with these germs, and then touch your face.



## How do I know if I have it?

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If you have been exposed to rodent urine or droppings, it can take 7 to 60 days to show symptoms. This virus can attack your lungs or kidneys. Hantavirus in your lungs or kidneys can feel like the flu and may share these common signs:

- Headache
- Chills
- Fever
- Abdominal pain and nausea

Here are some signs you may have Hantavirus Pulmonary (lungs) Syndrome:

- Coughing
- Dizziness
- Muscle aches
- Vomiting
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath



Here are some signs you may have Hemorrhagic Fever with Renal (kidneys) Syndrome:

- Back pain
- Blurred vision
- Rash
- Red eyes
- Flushed face
- Low blood pressure

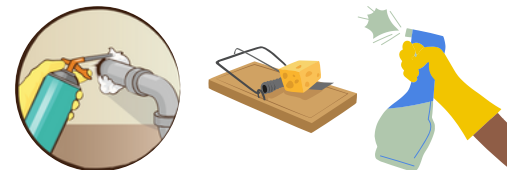


# How can I protect myself?

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Since rodents can carry Hantavirus, you should try to keep them out of your home. They can sneak into your house through really small holes. You can protect yourself from Hantavirus germs by following these steps:

- **Seal** holes inside and outside of your home.
- **Trap** mice and rats.
- **Clean** up the rodent's pee or poop, and the area you found the pee or poop.



You may find rodent urine or droppings, but not the rodent. If you find rodent urine or droppings, it's time to carefully clean. **When cleaning**, make sure you:

- Wear a mask and gloves.
- Spray the pee and poop with a bleach and water mixture (1 part bleach to 9 parts water).
- Use paper towels to wipe up the pee and poop.
- Clean the area with disinfectant, to kill germs

Do **NOT** sweep or vacuum rodent pee or poop. If you sweep or vacuum, Hantavirus germs can get into the air and you can breathe them in.

# How do I know I need to go to the doctor?

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If you've been around rodent urine or droppings, and start feeling sick, you should go to the doctor. You need to tell them that you've been around rodent urine and droppings. They can do a test to see if it is Hantavirus. The sooner the doctor knows what is wrong, the sooner they can get you the care you need.

# How should I take care of myself or someone who has Hantavirus?

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It's important to see a doctor right away, so they can give you medicine to treat your symptoms. Your doctor will look after you to make sure you are getting better. If you are left untreated, this disease can be life-threatening.

To learn more, visit the Hantavirus webpage at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

