



Tularemia Fact Sheet

As of May 29, 2015



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Rabbits, squirrels and other small animals in Colorado may be infected with a bacterial disease called tularemia. People and their pets can get tularemia through contact with infected animals, from contaminated soil and water, or from the bites of deer flies or ticks.

How can tularemia be prevented?

- **Do not mow over animal carcasses**, and use a dust mask when mowing or doing landscape work.
- **Wear closed-toed shoes.** Don't go barefoot or wear sandals when mowing or doing gardening or landscape work. Tularemia can persist in the environment for weeks or months.
- **Wear gloves** while doing gardening or landscape work and practice good handwashing after participating in these activities.
- **Avoid contact with wild animals or rodents**, including voles, squirrels and rabbits; do not feed or handle them. If an animal carcass must be moved, place it in a garbage bag using a long-handled shovel, and place the bag in an outdoor garbage can.
- **See a healthcare provider** if you become ill with an abrupt onset of high fever and/or swollen lymph nodes or pneumonia. Tularemia can be treated with the right kind of antibiotics and early detection is best.
- **Protect your pets.** Prevent them from hunting or eating wild animals. Infected pets may in turn transmit the disease to people. See a veterinarian if your pet becomes ill with a high fever and/or swollen lymph nodes.
- **Wear a repellent** effective against ticks, biting flies and mosquitoes if you are in areas where sick or dead animals have been found. Repellents containing DEET are a good choice for humans.
- **Avoid drinking unpurified water** from streams or lakes and keep your pets from doing the same.

For More Information: Call the Weld County Department of Public Health and Environment at (970) 304-6415 or for general information about tularemia, visit www.cdc.gov/tularemia