



For immediate release:

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With Warm Weather Comes Risk of Animal-borne Illnesses

As the temperatures rise and outdoor activities become more prevalent, it's important to be aware of the possible risks of animal-borne illnesses. Hantavirus and rabies are two such illnesses that can pose serious health threats to humans.

Hantavirus:

Hantavirus is a potentially deadly virus passed to humans mainly through contact with infected rodents or their droppings. Humans catch it by breathing the air near the infected droppings of deer mice who have nested in an enclosed space, often over the winter. Sheds, cabins, even camp trailers can harbor these mice and the hantavirus they carry.

Symptoms of hantavirus infection may include fever, muscle aches, fatigue, and respiratory problems. In severe cases, it can lead to Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS), a severe respiratory illness with a high death rate.

How to clean area with rodent nests or droppings:

- Air out the area for a couple of hours
- Use gloves and masks when cleaning area; do not sweep or vacuum to clean area
- Spray droppings/nest until wet with a 10% household bleach solution (1 cup bleach for 1 gallon of water)
- Clean with paper towels and dispose in garbage bag, which must be tied shut

For more information regarding Hantavirus click on [CDPH Hantavirus website](#).

Rabies:

Rabies is a viral disease that affects the central nervous system and is usually pass from animal to human through the bite of an infected animal. While it can infect any mammal, including humans, it is most commonly associated with dogs, bats, raccoons, and foxes.

Warmer weather often means more outdoor activities, increasing the chances of encounters with potentially rabid animals. It's important to be aware, especially around wildlife, and to ensure pets are vaccinated against rabies.

If you find a bat in your house the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#) recommend the following:

- Call a professional exterminator
- Open all windows and doors, turn off lights if at night, and allow for bat to find its way out.
- Do-it-yourself bat removal method:
 - Contain bat in a room by closing windows and doors, away from children and pets
 - Use a sturdy container, such as a shoe box to trap the bat. Be gentle, slowly placing the container over the bat and slipping the lid/cardboard under the opening to safely enclose the bat
 - Wear thick work gloves when handling a bat as it can easily bite through single and double layers of cotton

Symptoms of rabies in humans may initially include fever and headache, but as the disease progresses, it can lead to hallucinations, paralysis, and ultimately death.

To prevent rabies:

- Vaccinate pets against rabies and keep their vaccinations up to date.
- Avoid contact with wild or stray animals, especially if they appear sick or behave strangely.
- ***If bitten by an animal, wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water and seek medical attention immediately.***

As we enjoy the warmer weather and spend more time outdoors, let's remember to take precautions to protect ourselves and our loved ones from these potentially dangerous illnesses. By staying informed and practicing simple preventive measures, we can reduce the risk of hantavirus and rabies transmission in our communities.

For more information regarding rabies go to Plumas County Environmental Health webpage or click on [Plumas County Vector and Rabies Control website](#)