



Tularemia

Tularemia, known as rabbit fever, is a bacterial infection that mostly affects rabbits and rodents. However, it can also infect cats, humans, and sheep along with some other animals. It is uncommon in dogs. Ticks or biting flies usually spread it. Infections can also come from drinking contaminated water, eating infected prey, or breathing it in. Humans can be exposed by handling infected animals.

Signs

Some infected cats won't have any signs, though a fever is common. Other signs include depression, lack of appetite, enlarged lymph nodes, abscesses, coughing, diarrhea, pneumonia, and mouth ulcers. Signs will vary depending on how the cat is exposed to the bacteria.



Diagnosis and Treatment

Diagnosis is by testing blood or tissues.

Treatment is with antibiotics. Cats can die without treatment.

Prevention

Tick control is critical for prevention. Keep cats indoors to prevent them from hunting and eating prey. Humans should avoid contact with possible contaminated water, wear gloves when handling dead animals or skinning wild game, and cook wild game meat thoroughly.