



South Central Public Health District

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

1020 Washington Street N • Twin Falls, ID 83301
(208) 737-5900

BRUCELLOSIS AS A BIOTERRORISM EVENT

What is Brucellosis?

The bacteria (germs) that cause Brucellosis are generally spread to humans by contact with infected animals (cows and sheep) or by drinking unpasteurized (contaminated) milk products. If the bacteria are intentionally released into the air, they could be inhaled (breathed) into your lungs and cause flu-like symptoms.

What are the symptoms of infection?

Not all persons exposed to the bacteria will get sick. The symptoms may include fever, headache, back pain, tiredness, chills, sweats, sore muscles, cough, pain in the lungs when you take a deep breath, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.

How will I know I was exposed to the bacteria?

It will depend on how the bacteria were released, where they were released, and where you were in relation to the release site. The further away you were from the release site, the less likely it will be that you were exposed.

How soon will the symptoms develop (incubation period)?

The symptoms may start from 5 days to two months after exposure.

Is Brucellosis spread from person-to-person?

No, the infection cannot be spread person-to-person.

How is the infection treated?

If you have symptoms of the infection, your health care provider (doctor or nurse) will give you an antibiotic.

How is the infection prevented?

If you are exposed to the bacteria, you will be offered an antibiotic. Even if you take the antibiotic, you may develop the infection. If symptoms of the infection develop while taking the antibiotic, you need to see a health care provider immediately.

How long should I take the antibiotic?

It is important that you take the antibiotic exactly as directed. The dose and the number of treatment days will differ depending on the antibiotic prescribed. If you develop side effects to the antibiotic, call your health care provider immediately.

Where can I get more information about Brucellosis?

You can call South Central Public Health District at 734-5900 ext. 239.