

FLEA-BORNE TYPHUS



What is flea-borne typhus?

Flea-borne typhus is a disease spread to people from bacteria found in infected fleas or their poop (also called flea dirt). Fleas become infected when they bite small animals and can then spread the bacteria to other animals and humans.

In Los Angeles County, the main sources of infected fleas are **rats**, **opossums**, and **free-roaming cats**. People who touch, pet or come in contact with these animals are at risk of getting infected. People living outdoors or in housing infested with rats or other rodents are also at risk of getting infected. Pet dogs and cats can bring fleas into and around your home. Infected animals are not known to get sick from flea-borne typhus.

Flea-borne typhus is **not** spread from person to person.

Symptoms

Illness usually starts within 2 weeks after contact with an infected flea or source animal and may include:

- Fever and chills
- Headache
- Muscle pain/body aches
- Nausea/vomiting
- Rash

When to Seek Medical Attention

If you develop these symptoms after coming in contact with fleas or free-roaming animals, see your healthcare provider right away.

Flea-borne typhus is treatable.

Most people recover, but severe cases can occur.

How can you prevent getting flea-borne typhus:



Routinely use flea control products on pets.



Keep rats and wildlife away from your home: seal up holes and crawl spaces, clean up trash and trim plants around your home.



Store food and trash in closed containers to avoid attracting rats and other animals.



Use EPA-registered insect repellents when outdoors.



Avoid petting or feeding free-roaming animals.

STAY INFORMED

Public Health Flea-borne Typhus webpage:
publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/diseases/Typhus/Index.htm
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