



Two Pet Dogs Identified With Rabies in Colorado

Two pet dogs tested positive for rabies in Colorado last week, one in Weld county and one in Yuma county. These dogs were not associated with each other, but both developed symptoms on the same day from similar type exposures. According to the owners, both dogs had encounters with oddly behaving skunks in the 2-3 weeks preceding development of rabies symptoms, but neither encounter was reported to public health officials until the dogs became ill.

These are the first cases of rabies among dogs in Colorado since 2003, when a dog from Texas tested positive. The last time a dog was exposed and developed rabies in Colorado was 1974. Contacts of these two dogs have been identified and have sought appropriate care to prevent rabies. These animals did not create a risk to other members of the public, and both have been euthanized.

As of May 14, 2017, Colorado State University and CDPHE laboratories have confirmed rabies in 43 animals (37 skunks, 1 coyote, 1 fox, 2 bats, and 2 dogs) in Colorado. Of these, at least 26 (60%) rabid animals were known or strongly suspected of exposing 44 domestic pets, 19 livestock animals and 13 people.

Although the last human case of rabies in a Colorado resident was in 1931, rabies in domestic pets increases the risk of exposure to people. No cure exists for rabies once symptoms appear, but preventive medication is available for people known or suspected to have been bitten by a rabid animal. It is critically important for people bitten or scratched by a wild animal, or an unfamiliar animal, to contact their health care provider.

For additional information on rabies in Colorado, visit: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/rabies-data>

For assistance with rabies risk assessment, or questions about post-exposure prophylaxis, call your local health department, or CDPHE at 303-692-2700 during business hours (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.) or 303-370-9395 after hours.

Foxes and Disease Concerns in Colorado

Foxes are carnivores in the family Canidae. They are considered part of the larger group of animals called mesocarnivores, along with coyotes, martens, raccoons, skunks, civets and some mongooses. Mesocarnivores are distinguished from larger carnivores such as mountain lions and wolves by their size, being often less than 35 pounds, and their diet. Mesocarnivore diets consist of 50 - 70% meat, with the rest of their nutrition obtained from some combination of vegetables, fruits, fungi, grasses and invertebrates such as grasshopper or crayfish.

Over the last 5 years in Colorado, we have had 12 foxes test positive for rabies. During that timeframe, no foxes tested positive for plague or tularemia until May 2017. This month, two fox kits in Jefferson County tested positive for plague, and one fox kit from Lincoln County tested positive for both tularemia and rabies. The reason this is an uncommon finding is that foxes are relatively resistant to developing severe disease leading to death from plague or tularemia. Likely, the young age of these kits associated with a loss of parental care contributed to their deaths.

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Foxes serve an important ecological role in Colorado, especially in peri-urban areas. They prey on numerous small mammal species such as mice, voles, squirrels and rabbits, helping keep those populations in check. They are beautiful animals, but best viewed from a distance. The biggest disease threat these animals face are rabies, distemper and mange. In the last 5 to 10 years these diseases have swept through Colorado fox populations, leaving only a few survivors in some areas. Though we cannot know definitively whether low fox population numbers played a role in the increases in rabbit

populations in 2014 and 2015, there may have been an effect. The high population densities of the rabbits certainly contributed to the statewide tularemia outbreak in rabbits, and the human tularemia epidemic we experienced those years as well.

Because foxes can harbor a variety of zoonotic diseases, we recommend that homeowners prevent them from living under porches, sheds or from denning under outbuildings. Secure pet food and water supplies, remove bird feeders and minimize rodent presence around your homes. For recommendations regarding how to actively discourage foxes from living on your property, including hazing options, visit Colorado Parks and Wildlife's Red Fox webpage at <http://cpw.state.co.us/learn/Pages/LivingwithWildlifeRedFox.aspx> or call your area wildlife office. For specific health concerns related to human-fox interactions or contact, you may call CDPHE at 303-692-2700, or your local health department.

Emerging Infectious Diseases Journal: Invasive Nontuberculous Mycobacterial Infections among Cardiothoracic Surgical Patients Exposed to Heater-Cooler Devices

Invasive nontuberculous mycobacteria (NTM) infections may result from a previously unrecognized source of transmission, heater-cooler devices (HCDs) used during cardiac surgery. In July 2015, the Pennsylvania Department of Health notified the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about a cluster of NTM infections among cardiothoracic surgical patients at 1 hospital. We conducted a case-control study to identify exposures causing infection, examining 11 case-patients and 48 control-patients. Eight (73%) case-patients had a clinical specimen identified as *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC). HCD exposure was associated with increased odds of invasive NTM infection; laboratory testing identified patient isolates and HCD samples as closely related strains of *M. chimaera*, a MAC species. This investigation confirmed a large US outbreak of invasive MAC infections in a previously unaffected patient population and suggested transmission occurred by aerosolization from HCDs. Recommendations have been issued for enhanced surveillance to identify potential infections associated with HCDs and measures to mitigate transmission risk.

For the full article, please go to: https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/23/5/16-1899_article



WHO Statement on Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

On May 9, the World Health Organization (WHO) was informed of a cluster of undiagnosed illness and deaths including haemorrhagic symptoms in Likati Health Zone, Bas Uele Province in the north of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), bordering Central African Republic. On May 11, the Ministry of Health of the Democratic Republic of Congo informed WHO that of five laboratory samples tested, one tested positive for Ebola virus at the Institut National de Recherche Biomédicale (INRB) laboratory in Kinshasa. Additional laboratory samples are currently being tested.

Since April 22, nine suspected cases including three deaths have been reported. Six cases are currently hospitalized. "An investigation team led by the Ministry of Health and supported by WHO and partners has deployed and is expected to reach the affected area in the coming days", says Dr Peter Salama, WHO Executive Director for Emergencies. WHO and partners are supporting the Ministry of Health in all aspects of the response, including epidemiological investigation, surveillance, logistics and supplies, communications and community engagement.

The statement can be found here: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/statements/2017/ebola-drc/en/>

Upcoming Training Opportunities

Applied Outbreak Investigation

When: Wednesday, May 24 | 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Where: San Juan Basin Public Health, Larkspur Room, 281 Sawyer Drive, Durango, CO 81303

When: Thursday, July 27, 2017 | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Where: Mesa County Workforce Center, Classroom D, 512 29½ Road, Grand Junction, CO 81504
Register: CO.TRAIN (www.co.train.org) - course ID 1053407
Contact: Nicole Comstock (nicole.comstock@state.co.us)

TB Update and Tuberculin Skin Testing Practicum for Health Care Providers

When: Wednesday, May 31 | 12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Where: Denver Public Health, 2nd Floor Auditorium | 605 Bannock St, Denver, CO
Register: <http://www.cvent.com/d/gvqyvg/4W> (Cost is \$35)
Contact: Carolyn Bargman (cbargman@dhha.org) at 303-602-7243
Christine Record (christine.record@state.co.us) at 303-692-2638

2017 Communicable Disease Training Road Show

When: Wednesday, May 31 | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Where: The Ranch Events Complex, Larimer County Conference Center, Brown and Beard Meeting Room, 5280 Arena Circle, Loveland, CO 80538

When: Thursday, June 29 | 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Where: Glenwood Springs Library, Community Room, 815 Cooper Ave, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601

When: Wednesday, July 12 | 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Where: CDPHE, DOC Main, Building A, 4300 Cherry Creek Drive South, Denver, CO 80246

When: Tuesday, July 25 | 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Where: Alamosa Public Health Department, Regional EOC, 2nd Floor, 8900 Independence Way, Alamosa, CO 81101

Register: CO.TRAIN (www.co.train.org) - Course ID: 1070492
Contact: Nereida Corral (nereida.corral@state.co.us)
Kerri Brown (kerri.brown@state.co.us)

