

# HOW HANTAVIRUS IS TRANSMITTED

You can get Hantavirus from inhaling dried particles of urine, droppings or saliva from infected rodents. You can also get it from touching infected rodents or their nests.



## What activities increase risk of exposure?



Entering or cleaning buildings that have been closed for a long period of time, such as hunting shacks, garages, storage sheds, or anywhere with deer mouse droppings.

## How do you recognize an infected rodent?

Hantavirus is primarily carried by deer mice. These mice have large eyes and a bi-colored tail. However, it is difficult to tell if a mouse is a deer mouse, and impossible to tell an infected mouse from one that is not infected. So consider all mice infected.

# HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

The best way to protect yourself from Hantavirus is to control rodents in and around your home.

You can reduce your risk by following these tips:

### Keep your home clean

Clean up spilled food and keep stored food in sealed containers to keep rodents out. Remove trash regularly.

### Keep rodents out

A mouse can fit through a hole the size of a dime. Seal off any openings into your home. You can use a combination of steel pot scrubbers (similar to a coarse steel wool) and spray foam insulation to seal holes.

### Keep rodents away

Reduce shelter and food sources within 100 feet of your home. For example, keep grass and shrubs cut and thinned, and keep wood piles elevated 18 inches off the ground and away from your house.

Call Multnomah County Vector Control at (503) 988-3464 or e-mail [vector.nuisance@multco.us](mailto:vector.nuisance@multco.us) if you think you may have a rodent problem.

# CLEANING UP AFTER AN INFESTATION

Follow these clean-up procedures to reduce your risk of getting Hantavirus:

Note that these are recommendations provided by the CDC. Remember that bleach can stain surfaces and that cleaning chemicals can be harmful if misused. ALWAYS follow labeled instructions.

NEVER dry sweep or vacuum a rodent infested area. ALWAYS use wet cleaning methods.

ALWAYS wear rubber gloves, long sleeves, protective eyewear and a dust mask when cleaning. This will help protect you from contamination, and from coming in contact with potentially harmful chemicals.

A **10 parts water to 1 part chlorine bleach solution** or a household disinfectant can be used to clean up contaminated areas.



Dispose of dead rodents by disinfecting first. Use a tool to pick up the rodent, place it in a bag and seal it. Place the bag within another bag and seal it. Put the bag in a covered outdoor trash can that is regularly emptied.



Wash your hands thoroughly with warm water, soap and dry with paper towels when you are done cleaning. Launder your clothes normally.

# WHAT IS HANTAVIRUS?

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Hantavirus is a group of viruses that may be carried by some rodents, such as deer mice.

Hantavirus can cause Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS) which is an illness that affects the lungs. HPS can make you very sick.

## What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of HPS develop within 1 to 5 weeks and are flu-like. They can include fever, headache, shortness of breath, coughing, vomiting and stomach pain.

## What is the vector?

Deer mice can be found in Multnomah County. They can carry the virus, but that doesn't mean that all deer mice are infected.

## Do all rodents carry Hantavirus?

Other common Oregon rodents such as the Norway rat, roof rat, house mouse and domesticated rats and mice **do not** spread Hantavirus.

If you think you may have been exposed to deer mice and become sick, seek medical attention immediately. Be sure to let your health care provider know where you have been and what you were doing.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

If you live outside of Portland, there may be another local agency responsible for rodent control. Contact information for local municipalities is listed below for your convenience.

### City of Fairview

Main Office  
(503) 665-7929

### City of Gresham

Code Compliance Office  
(503) 618-2463

### City of Wood Village

City Hall  
(503) 667-6211

### City of Troutdale

Code Compliance Office  
(503) 491-4009

### City of Maywood Park

Multnomah County Code Enforcement  
(Call this number for rodent questions within unincorporated Multnomah County)  
(503) 988-3464

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### Multnomah County Health Department Vector Control

5235 N. Columbia Blvd.  
Portland, OR 97203  
Phone: (503) 988-3464

[HTTPS://MULTCO.US/HEALTH/STAYING-HEALTHY/PEST-  
PREVENTION-AND-CONTROL/RATS](https://multco.us/health/staying-healthy/pest-prevention-and-control/rats)



# RODENTS AND HANTAVIRUS

