



Where can I find more resources about typhus?

- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LAC DPH):
www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/VectorTyphus.htm
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH):
www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Typhus.aspx
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
www.cdc.gov/typhus/murine/index.html

Key Points:

- **Flea-borne typhus** is a disease that fleas can spread to humans. Infected fleas carry bacteria (germs) that cause the disease. It is not spread person-to-person.
- Avoid fleas and use **flea control products** on your pets and insect repellent (against fleas) on you.
- **Never feed or touch wild animals**, especially opossums, rats, and stray cats.



Who can I call for more information?

If your doctor has questions about flea-borne typhus, call:

- **Acute Communicable Disease Control Program:** (213)-240-7941
- Physicians should report suspect typhus cases to (888)-397-3993
More information can be found at:
www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/Cdrs.htm

If you have concerns regarding your pets, call:

- **Veterinary Public Health Program:** (213)-989-7060

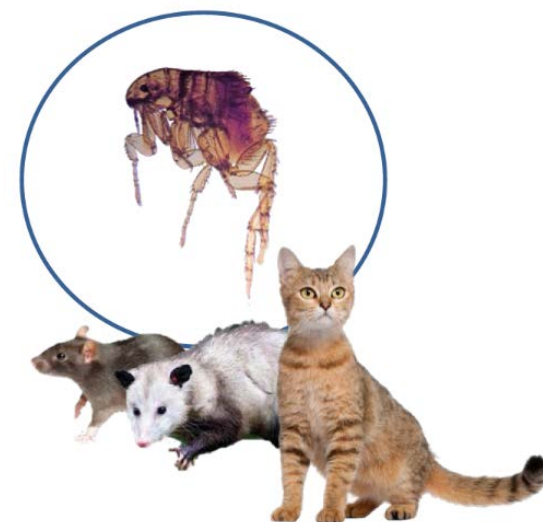
If you have any issues with wild animals or rodents, call:

- **Environmental Health Vector Management Program:** (626)-430-5450



Flea-borne Typhus

What you need to know and how to protect yourself and your community.



(Updated 3/22/19)

What is flea-borne typhus?

Flea-borne typhus (endemic or murine typhus) is a disease that fleas can spread to humans. Bacteria (germs) found in infected fleas and their feces (poop) cause typhus. People can get sick with typhus when they come into contact with the flea feces. People become infected when flea feces are rubbed into cuts or scrapes in the skin or rubbed into the eyes. Typhus is not spread from person-to-person.

What are the symptoms?

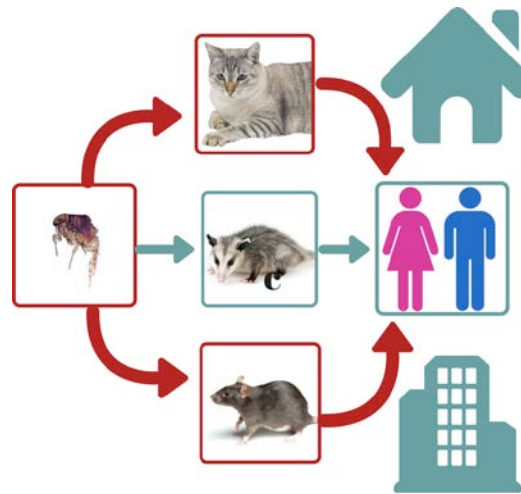
Signs of typhus can start 6-14 days after contact with the infected flea. Many people have high fever, headache, chills, body aches and pains. A rash can appear on the chest, back, arms, or legs. Most people will recover without treatment, but some cases may be severe. When left untreated, severe illness can cause damage to the liver, kidneys, heart, lungs, and brain.

How is the disease diagnosed and treated?

Typhus is diagnosed with a specific blood test. Call your doctor if you have symptoms. This disease can be treated with certain antibiotics (medicine that kills bacteria). There is no vaccine for typhus.

How does flea-borne typhus spread?

In Los Angeles County, typhus infects the fleas of rats, stray cats, opossums, or other small animals. Typhus spreads when animals carrying infected fleas come into close contact with people. Typhus can spread to other areas when these animals move from place to place.



Rats, opossums, and stray cats often exist in larger numbers in communities where there is enough food supply and available areas where they can hide and live.

There are steps you can take to prevent typhus.

What steps can I take to protect myself, family and pets?

1. Keep Wild Animals Away

Homes should be kept in good repair to keep wild animals from entering.

- Remove brush, rock piles, junk, cluttered firewood, or any structure/area where animals can nest or hide.
- Remove food, including pet food, that can attract animals. Keep trash cans tightly covered and pick up fallen fruit. Don't feed animals or stray cats.

2. Practice Safe Flea Control

Don't allow pets to roam freely where they can come into contact with infected fleas. Use flea control products for your pets as instructed by the label. Contact your veterinarian if you need advice.

3. Protect Yourself

Wear protective gear, such as gloves and a mask, when cleaning outside. Use EPA-registered insect repellent labeled for use against fleas. Wash your hands when finished.