

Q Fever

FACT SHEET

What is Q Fever?

Q fever is a disease caused by a bacteria. Cattle, sheep, and goats as well as a wide variety of other animals, including other breeds of livestock and domestic pets, carry the bacteria. Although infected animals do not usually get sick from these bacteria, they excrete the bacteria in milk, urine, feces and the placenta and amniotic fluid during the birthing process. The bacteria live for a long time in the environment. Inhaling the bacteria from air that contains contaminated barnyard dust infects humans.

Who Can Get Q Fever?

People most at risk for getting Q fever include veterinarians, meat processing plant workers, sheep and dairy workers, livestock farmers, and researchers at facilities housing sheep.

What are the Symptoms?

Symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Chills
- Headache
- Weakness
- Weight loss
- Sweats

What is the Treatment?

Q fever can be treated by antibiotics.

How Can You Prevent Q Fever?

- Use only pasteurized milk and milk products
- Carefully dispose of placentas, birthing fluids and aborted fetuses