

---

# DISEASES : Tularemia

---

This fact sheet provides basic information only. It must not take the place of medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always talk to a healthcare professional about any health concerns you have, and before you make any changes to your diet, lifestyle or treatment.

Tularemia is a rare bacterial disease caused by the bacterium *Franciscella tularensis*. Numerous wild animals, especially rabbits, hares, voles, muskrats, beavers, and some domestic animals act as the host for the bacteria. The disease is then transmitted to humans through the bite of certain ticks and deer flies, or by contact of the skin with contaminated water, blood or tissue while handling carcasses of infected animals.

## Symptoms

There are a variety of symptoms that can be related to tularemia. The skin, lymph nodes, lungs and blood may be affected. The most frequent symptom is an ulcer at the site the bacteria entered, together with swelling of the local lymph nodes.

The incubation period is usually three to five days and ranges from one to 14 days.

## Diagnosis

Diagnosis is usually made by a physician, and is supported by evidence or history of a tick or deerfly bite, exposure to tissues of an infected animal, or exposure to potentially contaminated water. Diagnosis is confirmed by a blood test.

## Treatment\*

Antibiotics will be provided by your physician for the treatment of tularemia.

Other treatment will depend on the form of the disease.

## Further Information

Anyone with concerns or questions about tularemia : please contact your physician or the staff of your local public health unit.

## References

The information provided is subject to change. The information was collated from the following three sources :

1. Chin, J. "Control of Communicable Diseases Manual". 17th Edition. 2000. American Public Health Association: Washington D.C.
2. Health Canada website
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website

\*Advice on the most up-to-date treatment should be sought from a clinical expert.

## **Government of Ontario**

For information about health services and resources :

[www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca)

For consumer-friendly health tips and information :

[www.HealthyOntario.com](http://www.HealthyOntario.com)

INFOline: 1-877-234-4343;

TTY: 1-800-387-5559

Telehealth Ontario:

1-866-797-0000; TTY 1-866-797-0007

INFOline is open during business hours and can provide general information on healthcare.

Telehealth Ontario is a 24/7 service which uses nurse practitioners to answer your immediate health concerns.