

CORPUS CHRISTI-NUECES COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT



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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

March 10, 2014

Press Release

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HEALTH DISTRICT ADVISES RESIDENTS: “LEARN THE FACTS ABOUT MURINE TYPHUS”

The Corpus Christi-Nueces County Public Health District is advising residents to learn the facts about murine typhus.

Murine typhus, also called typhus or endemic typhus, is a rickettsial disease caused by the organism *Rickettsia typhi*. Most of the murine typhus cases in Texas occur in South Texas from Nueces County southward to the Rio Grande Valley, but a few cases are reported in other parts of the state each year.

According to William Burgin, Jr., M.D., Local Healthy Authority, “Rats and their fleas are the natural reservoirs, and other animals such as opossums and domestic cats, may also be reservoirs for fleas that can transmit typhus.”

Health officials advise that fleas, such as the rat flea and the cat flea are the most common vectors (animals that transfer the disease from one host to another) of typhus.

“Typhus is easily treatable,” states Dr. Burgin. “And you can only get typhus once in your lifetime.”

Symptoms of the disease include headache, fever, nausea, and body aches. Five or six days after the initial symptoms, you may get a rash that starts on the trunk of your body and spreads to your arms and legs. If left untreated, the disease may last for several months. A doctor can conduct tests to tell you if you have typhus.

If you suspect that you have murine typhus, see a doctor. Typhus is easily treated with certain antibiotics.

For more information go to:

http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/murine_typhus/information/

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