

## FACT SHEET – *Tularemia*

### TULAREMIA IS A DISEASE

- It is caused by a type of bacteria.
  - It occurs most often in rural areas.
  - Tularemia is usually found in small mammals like rabbits, squirrels, and mice.
  - It is sometimes called “rabbit fever.”
- Tularemia is not passed from one person to another.
  - People usually get tularemia from the bites of infected insects, fleas, and ticks.
  - Sometimes people get it from handling infected animals.
  - Occasionally, people get it from water, soil, or air that has the germs.

### PEOPLE CAN GET TULAREMIA

- People with tularemia have:
  - fever and chills
  - headache and body aches
  - runny nose and sore throat
- If not treated, tularemia can last for weeks or months with
  - sweats, fever, and chills
  - increasing weakness
  - loss of appetite and weight
- Only a doctor can test to be sure if someone has tularemia.

### ILLNESS CAN BE AVOIDED AND TREATED

- If you hear of tularemia in your area
  - avoid handling sick and dead animals if possible
  - learn how to safely clean game animals
  - protect yourself against biting insects
- There is no vaccine to prevent tularemia.
- Some antibiotics can cure the disease.

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services  
Frankfort, KY

<http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/preparedness>

Kentucky Regional Poison Center  
Louisville, KY

**EMERGENCY: 1-800-222-1222**

<http://www.krpc.com>

Lake Cumberland District Health Dept.  
(606) 678 – 4761

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
Atlanta, GA

**Toll free: 1-800-311-3435**

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/tularemia>