

Public Health Notice

Tularemia has been found in this area

Ventura County Public Health Department has identified the disease Tularemia in area wildlife. Tularemia is a rare, but serious disease that affects the eyes, lymph nodes, lungs and skin. It is commonly known as “rabbit fever” or “deer fly fever”.

How is Tularemia spread

- Bug bites
- Exposure to sick and dead animals
- Airborne bacteria
- Contaminated food and water

Animals that can transmit Tularemia

- Rabbits
- Rodents
- Ticks/Deer Flies
- Coyotes



Take precautions to protect yourself and your pets

- **AVOID** handling wild animals (e.g. rabbits, rodents). Do not feed or touch wild animals.
- To properly dispose of dead animals on your property - Use gloves and a long handled shovel to double-bag an animal carcass, then dispose of the bag in an outside garbage can.
- If there are dead rabbits in the area, avoid using mowers, power weed trimmers or other dust generating machinery as Tularemia-containing dust can be a source of infection.
- **PROTECT** your pets. Keep them on a leash to prevent them from hunting or eating wild animals or from contact with contaminated water by a dead animal. See your vet if your pet becomes ill with a high fever and/or swollen lymph nodes.
- **CONSIDER** using veterinarian-approved flea and tick medication on dogs, cats, and horses, as this disease can be transmitted via ticks and biting flies.
- **PREVENT** insect bites by wearing long sleeves, pants, and socks and using repellent containing DEET.
- Try to **MINIMIZE** tick populations around the home, by maintaining vegetation and removing leaf litter, brush, and weeds. For additional information on preventing ticks in the yard visit: https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/prev/in_the_yard.html.
- **CONSULT** your health care provider if you become ill with fever, enlarged lymph nodes, lesions in the mouth/eyes/skin, or febrile illness after exposure to dead wild rabbits or tick/insect bites. Contact a veterinarian if your pet develops fever or swollen glands.

For general information about tularemia, visit www.cdc.gov/tularemia.
<http://www.vchca.org/agency-divisions/public-health>