

**ROLL CALL TRAINING ONLINE**

Deployment Period \_\_-XX

**TOPIC:** Wellness  
**SUBJECT:** Typhus  
**PREPARED BY:** Personnel Division, Medical Liaison Section  
Risk Assessment (213) 486-6646/47

**Date prepared:** 10/23/2019

**REFERENCES:** Personnel Department Safety Bulletin Issue February 2019,  
Public Health LA County/Gov

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE**

Officers will review typhus, the symptoms, and what to do when exposure has occurred.

**WHAT IS FLEA BORNE TYPHUS**

Flea-borne (murine) typhus, is a disease caused by a bacteria called *Rickettsia typhi*. Flea-borne typhus is spread to people through contact with infected fleas. Fleas become infected when they bite infected animals, such as rats, cats, or opossums. When an infected flea bites a person or animal, the bite breaks the skin, causing a wound.

Fleas poop when they feed. The poop (also called flea dirt) can then be rubbed into the bite wound or other wounds causing infection. People can also breathe in infected flea dirt or rub it into their eyes. This bacteria is not spread from person to person.

**MODES OF TRANSMISSION**

Fleas are a major transporter of typhus to humans. Fleas can jump about one foot making it easy for them to move from one host to the next.

In LA County, typhus usually spreads when animals such as rats, stray cats, opossums, or other small animals carrying infected fleas come into close contact with people. Typhus can then spread to other locations when these animals move from one populated place to another unchecked, such as homeless encampments

NOTE: If rats, cats, dogs, or opossums are observed at a police station or police facility, report any sightings to a supervisor or watch commander.

## **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

Signs of typhus can start within two weeks after contact with the infected flea.

Symptoms: A rash can appear on the body, Chills & fever, Body aches & pain, Nausea & vomiting.

## **TREATMENT FLEABORN**

If an exposure occurs, or you believe that you are having symptoms, immediately seek medical attention (on or off duty) and notify your supervisor.

## **PREVENTION**

Washing your hands can help reduce the likelihood of typhus and other communicable diseases.

WASH YOUR HANDS:

1. WASH HANDS (WARM SOAPY WATER)
2. USE SOAP
3. SCRUB YOUR ENTIRE HANDS THOROUGHLY & COMPLETELY
4. RINSE UNDER RUNNING WATER
5. USE PAPER TOWLES

TIP: Hand sanitizers can be carried on your person or in your vehicles.

## **ARREST**

Universal precautions apply when the presence of typhus exists as with other potentially contagious illnesses of a suspect or arrestee. A person may be isolated during the booking process until receiving a medical evaluation or treatment. The decision to isolate in such circumstances shall be based on the likelihood of contact with others.

**CONCLUSION:**

Seek medical attention if you believe you have signs or symptoms of typhus.

You must play a direct role in keeping yourself safe.

Additional information, contact Occupational Safety and Health Division

213-473-7097.

[Frequently Asked Questions \(linked\)](#)