

CDRS

Communicable Disease Reporting System

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE FACT SHEET

Q FEVER

Q Fever is a disease caused by the organism *Coxiella burnetii*. This disease occurs worldwide. Sheep, cattle, goats, cats, dogs, some wild animals, birds and ticks are natural reservoirs. Consumption of unpasteurized (raw) milk may also be a source of infection.

Symptoms

- Only about ½ the people infected show the symptoms of this disease.
- Most acute cases of Q fever begin with sudden onset of one or more of the following: high fevers (up to 104-105° F), severe headache, general malaise, muscle pain, confusion, sore throat, chills, sweats, non-productive cough, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, and chest pain.
- Fever usually lasts for 1 to 2 weeks.
- In general, most patients will recover to good health within several months without any treatment.
- Chronic Q fever is infrequent, but endocarditis and hepatitis are the major manifestations. Acute Q fever is rarely fatal.

Transmission

- Q fever is spread by breathing dust from contaminated areas or contact with infected laboratory specimens.
- Transmission may also occur from direct contact with contaminated materials, such as wool, straw, fertilizer, or laundry from people working with infected animals.
- Q fever is rarely transmitted person-to-person.

Treatment

- Treatment is with doxycycline for 15-21 days. Treat again if relapses occur.
- For chronic Q fever, use more than one antibiotic for several years.

Prevention

- Consume only pasteurized products.
- No vaccine is currently available in the United States.

All information is general in nature and is not intended to be used as a substitute for appropriate professional advice.

Franklin County



Board of Health

Report Disease With Ease - 24 hours a day

www.cdrsinfo.com

Columbus and Franklin County Communicable Disease Reporting System

c/o The Franklin County Board of Health, 280 East Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43215

(614) 719-8888 ♦ (614) 719-8890 fax ♦ cds@franklincountyohio.gov - email

