

What is brucellosis?

Brucellosis is a bacterial disease that can affect various organs of the body.

Who gets brucellosis?

Everyone is susceptible to the bacteria and might get the disease if exposed. It is more likely to be found in people who work with livestock or in slaughterhouses.

How is brucellosis spread?

The disease is contracted by ingesting unpasteurized milk and unpasteurized dairy products from infected cows and goats or by contact with blood, urine, discharges, and aborted fetuses from infected cattle, pigs, or goats. It is unlikely that this disease would be spread from one person to another.

What are the symptoms of brucellosis?

Symptoms of brucellosis include intermittent or irregular fever of variable duration, headache, weakness, swollen lymph nodes, profuse sweating, chills, weight loss and generalized aching. Children sometimes have a mild disease, but the disease can also be severe.

How soon do symptoms appear?

The time period is highly variable, but symptoms usually appear within 5-60 days.

Does past infection with brucellosis make a person immune?

It is unlikely that an individual will be reinfected.

What is the treatment for brucellosis?

Doxycycline plus either streptomycin or rifampin is the treatment of choice. Early diagnosis leading to prompt treatment is essential to prevent chronic infection.

What can be done to prevent the spread of brucellosis?

The use of pasteurized milk and dairy products and prevention of contact with infected cattle, hogs, sheep or goats will reduce the risk of infection. Livestock can be tested by a veterinarian to determine if they are infected.