

What is Brucellosis?

Brucellosis is a bacterial disease that is spread among feral swine through close contact. Infected swine carry these bacteria for life.

You can get sick with brucellosis if blood, body fluid, or tissues (such as meat, testicles, liver, and other organs) from an infected animal comes in contact with your eyes, nose, mouth, or cuts in your skin.

This disease can cause severe, long-lasting health problems, and even death, if it is not diagnosed and treated quickly.

Symptoms in Humans

- Fever
- Chills
- Night sweats
- Headache
- Loss of appetite
- Fatigue
- Joint pain
- Muscle pain

Symptoms may not develop immediately—you may start to feel sick between one week to six months after coming in contact with an infected animal.

Diagnosis

- Your doctor can perform blood tests that check for brucellosis.

Treatment

- Brucellosis can be treated with medicine (called antibiotics) if the disease is diagnosed quickly.
 - You will be prescribed at least two antibiotics to take for 6-8 weeks or longer.
- Take all of the medicine that you are given for as long as the doctor tells you to, even if you start to feel better. This will prevent symptoms from returning or lasting long-term.
 - Long-lasting symptoms can include arthritis, fever, depression, fatigue, or heart infections.

FERAL SWINE HUNTERS: PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FROM BRUCELOSIS

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
THIS DISEASE AND HOW TO
HAVE A SAFER HUNT!

Additional Resources:

For more information on feral swine in your area, visit the website for the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies. Click on the Members section, and search for your state under the list of State Fish & Wildlife Agencies.

Please remember to call your state fish and wildlife agency to report sick or dead wildlife.

<http://www.fishwildlife.org>

For more information on brucellosis, visit the CDC website.

<http://www.cdc.gov/brucellosis/>

To learn about feral swine damage management, go to the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service website and search “Feral Swine” in the search toolbar.

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov>



Protect yourself and your family from the diseases feral swine can spread by following these 4 steps:

1

Wear protective gear while hunting and butchering.



- Wear eye protection such as safety glasses or goggles.
- Wear rubber gloves when handling carcasses.
- Wear boots or other closed footwear that can be disinfected.
- Clean gloves and boots with a disinfectant such as a diluted bleach solution.
10% diluted bleach can be made with one cup of bleach for every nine cups of water.

2

Use safe field dressing methods.



- Don't approach and handle dead animals or animals that look sick.
- Prepare game in a well-ventilated area with plenty of fresh air, such as outdoors or in a room with open windows.
- Do not eat, drink, smoke, or dip tobacco while dressing your game.
- Use clean, sharp knives for field dressing and butchering.
- Make sure that you have enough lighting to see properly.

- Slow down. Watch your hands and take the time to make clean cuts.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds and dry them with a clean cloth after dressing.
— If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer or wipe.
- Clean any cuts or scratches with soap and warm water; treat with an antiseptic and cover with a bandage.
- Clean all tools and surfaces that come in contact with the carcass with a disinfectant such as diluted bleach.
- Check with your state hunting agency for proper disposal of field dressing waste (paper products, animal carcass and tissues, etc.).

3

Avoid direct contact with feral swine.



- Adults and children should not touch the carcass with bare hands, and children should be kept a safe distance away from the field dressing site to reduce the risk of being splashed with body fluids.
- Dogs can also become sick with brucellosis. The disease can then spread from dogs to humans.
 - Don't feed your dog raw meat or let them play with the animal carcass.
 - If your dog comes in contact with a hog during your hunt, watch for signs of illness (swollen glands, failed pregnancies, swollen testicles, weak newborn puppies).
 - Contact your veterinarian with any questions or concerns.

4

Cook your meat thoroughly and follow food safety tips.



- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before and after preparing the meat.
- Clean surfaces with hot, soapy water before and after butchering.
- Separate raw game meat from cooked game meat and other foods.
- Cook game meat to an internal temperature of 160°F as measured with a food thermometer.
- Chill raw and cooked game meat immediately.
- Freezing, smoking, drying, and pickling do not kill the bacteria that cause brucellosis. For more information on Food Safety, visit: www.foodsafety.gov

If you get sick with a flu-like illness within 1 week to 6 months after contact with feral swine, tell your doctor about your hunting activity!

