



Q FEVER FACT SHEET

WHAT IS Q FEVER?

Q fever is a disease caused by bacteria. This bacteria naturally infects some animals, such as goats, sheep, and cattle and are found in the birth products (i.e. placenta, amniotic fluid), urine, feces, and milk of infected animals. People who help animals give birth, such as farmers and veterinarians, have a higher chance of getting Q fever.

HOW DO YOU GET Q FEVER?

People can get infected by breathing in dust that has been contaminated by infected animal feces, urine, milk, and birth products. Direct contact (e.g. touching, being licked) with an animal is not required to become sick with Q fever. People may also get sick with Q fever by eating contaminated, unpasteurized dairy products.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms typically appear 2-3 weeks after exposure to the bacteria. Symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Chills or sweats
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Muscle Aches
- Nausea, Vomiting, or diarrhea
- Chest Pain
- Stomach Pain
- Weight loss
- Non-productive cough

TREATMENT

Most people who are sick with Q fever will recover without antibiotic treatment. Some people may require an antibiotic. Discuss treatment options with your doctor.

PREVENTION

Avoid contact with animals, especially while animals are giving birth. Animals can be infected and appear healthy.

Do not consume raw milk or raw milk products.

DGHD EFFORTS

Reports of suspected and confirmed cases of disease are made to the Delaware General Health District (DGHD). The DGHD investigates potential sources of illness, conducts surveillance for the spread of illness, and engages in community outreach and education.