

WHAT IS Q FEVER?

Q fever is a disease caused by the bacteria *Coxiella burnetii*. This bacteria naturally infects some animals, such as goats, sheep, and cattle. The bacteria are found in the birth products (i.e. placenta, amniotic fluid), urine, feces, and milk of infected animals. **People can get infected by breathing in dust that has been contaminated by infected animal feces, urine, milk, and birth products.**

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF Q FEVER?

About half of people infected with Q fever bacteria will get sick with a flu-like illness. People may feel sick 2–3 weeks after contact with the bacteria.

Symptoms can include:



HIGH FEVER



FEELING TIRED



CHILLS OR SWEATS



HEADACHE



MUSCLE ACHES



COUGH



VOMITING OR DIARRHEA



CHEST PAIN



FORT BEND
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

WHO IS AT RISK?

Anyone who has contact with animals infected with Q fever bacteria, especially people who work on farms or with animals. Examples of high-risk jobs include:

- Livestock farmers
- Slaughterhouse workers
- Veterinarians
- Animal or laboratory researchers

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

Q fever is most commonly spread to people by infected farm animals, including goats, cattle, and sheep. People can get Q fever by:



Touching feces, urine, milk, or blood from an infected animal.



Breathing in dust that contains Q fever bacteria.



Touching a newborn animal or birthing products (placenta, birth fluids) from an infected animal.



Drinking raw (unpasteurized) milk.

HOW CAN YOU PREVENT IT?

Use the following tips to reduce your exposure:

1. Avoid contact with infected animals during birthing when possible. If you assist in animal deliveries or have contact with birth products, protect yourself by wearing:



Gloves



**Eye protection
(e.g. goggles)**



**Protective clothing
(e.g. coveralls and boots)**



**Masks (an N95 or
higher respirator)**



Talk to your healthcare provider about whether it is safe for you to wear a mask or respirator.



Additional Occupational Safety and Health Administration requirements may apply. Talk to your employer

2. Shower and change your clothes and shoes after working with animals
3. Eat and drink only pasteurized milk and dairy products

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR IT?

It is important to know that there is no vaccine in the United States to prevent Q fever infection. Most people who are infected with Q fever will recover with no antibiotic treatment. However, those who develop chronic Q fever will require several months of antibiotic treatment as it is a life-threatening infection.



Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/qfever/index.html>

Disclaimer: This information does not constitute medical advice or a doctor-patient relationship



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