



HANTAVIRUS (ANDES HANTAVIRUS) INFORMATION FOR OUR COMMUNITY



**BREVARD COUNTY
MEDICAL SOCIETY**



A Letter to the General Public

From Brevard County Medical Society President

Dr. Elizabeth Kolawole, MD, FAAMM

Dear Brevard County Community,

I know many members of our community have seen recent news reports regarding hantavirus and may understandably have concerns. As President of the Brevard County Medical Society, I want to provide calm, clear, and medically accurate information.



Hantavirus is a rare viral infection most commonly spread through exposure to infected rodent urine, saliva, or droppings. The virus is usually associated with areas where rodents are present, especially enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces such as sheds, garages, barns, attics, cabins, and storage buildings.



ANDES HANTAVIRUS

Certain strains, particularly Andes hantavirus found in parts of South America, have been shown to have limited person-to-person transmission in close-contact settings.

AT THIS TIME, THE OVERALL
RISK TO THE GENERAL
PUBLIC REMAINS

LOW.

PEOPLE WHO MAY BE AT HIGHER RISK INCLUDE:



Individuals cleaning rodent-infested spaces



Campers and hikers



Farmers and outdoor workers



Pest control workers



Individuals exposed to rodent droppings or nests

SYMPTOMS MAY INITIALLY FEEL SIMILAR TO THE FLU AND CAN INCLUDE:



Fever



Body aches



Fatigue



Headache



Nausea



Vomiting



Shortness of breath

SIMPLE SAFETY MEASURES CAN SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE RISK:



Avoid sweeping or vacuuming rodent droppings directly



Ventilate closed spaces before cleaning



Use gloves and disinfectants when cleaning contaminated areas



Seal openings in homes and buildings that allow rodents to enter



Store food securely and maintain clean environments



If you experience severe symptoms after known rodent exposure, seek medical attention promptly.



Most importantly, I encourage our community to remain informed but not fearful. Rare infections can receive significant media attention, but panic does not protect public health — education and preparedness do.



Our physicians and healthcare teams remain committed to protecting the health and well-being of Brevard County through evidence-based care, public education, and compassionate service.



Please continue taking care of yourselves, your families, and one another.



Warm regards,
Dr. Elizabeth Kolawole, MD, FAAMM
President, Brevard County Medical Society

Thank you for helping keep
Brevard County a healthy,
safe, and informed community.

