

What are the symptoms of
VIRAL
HEMORRHAGIC
FEVER

Hemorrhagic fever symptoms can appear
4–21 days after exposure. They include:

- Fever**
- Fatigue**
- Dizziness**
- Rash**
- Muscle aches**
- Loss of strength**
- Exhaustion**

Severe VHF cases often show signs of
bleeding under the skin, in internal
organs and from body openings such
as the mouth, eyes or rectum.

Severely ill patients may also show
signs of shock, coma, delirium,
seizures and kidney failure.

For more information, call

Aloha United Way



health.hawaii.gov
or
www.cdc.gov



The Department of Health provides access to
its programs and activities without regard
to race, color, national origin (including
language), age, sex, religion, or disability.

Write or call our Affirmative Action Officer
at Box 3378, Honolulu, HI 96801-3378 or
at (808) 586-4616 (voice)
within 180 days of a problem.

Contents updated 11/2003

VIRAL
HEMORRHAGIC
FEVER



Hawaii State Department of Health
health.hawaii.gov
For more information or referral
Call 2-1-1

What is viral hemorrhagic fever?

Viral hemorrhagic fever (VHF) is a group of illnesses caused by several distinct families of viruses, many of which cause severe, life-threatening disease. These illnesses are called “hemorrhagic” because they are often associated with bleeding.



Viruses associated with most VHFs are found naturally in animals, ticks and mosquitoes. The viruses are totally dependent on these “hosts” for survival.

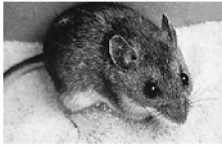
Viruses associated with most VHFs are found naturally in animals, ticks and mosquitoes. The viruses are totally dependent on these “hosts” for survival.

Viruses associated with most VHFs are found naturally in animals, ticks and mosquitoes. The viruses are totally dependent on these “hosts” for survival.

How is viral hemorrhagic fever (VHF) spread?

Viruses causing hemorrhagic fever are initially spread to humans when:

- Humans have contact with urine, feces, saliva, or other bodily fluids from infected rodents.
- Infected mosquitoes or ticks bite a human.
- Additionally, some of these carriers may spread viruses to other animals such as livestock. Humans could then become infected when they care for or slaughter the animals.



Some viruses that cause hemorrhagic fever can spread from one person to another, once an initial person has become infected. This type of secondary transmission of the virus can occur directly, through close contact with infected people or their body fluids. It can also occur indirectly, through contact with objects, like syringes and needles, contaminated with infected body fluids.

For those hemorrhagic fever viruses that can be transmitted from person to person, avoiding close physical contact with infected people and their body fluids is the best way to control the spread of the disease.

What are the symptoms of viral hemorrhagic fever?

Hemorrhagic fever symptoms can appear 4–21 days after exposure. They include:

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Rash
- Muscle aches
- Loss of strength
- Exhaustion



Severe VHF cases often show signs of bleeding under the skin, in internal organs and from body openings such as the mouth, eyes or rectum.

Severely ill patients may also show signs of shock, coma, delirium, seizures and kidney failure.

How is viral hemorrhagic fever treated?

Patients are hospitalized and receive supportive therapy. There is no specific treatment for viral hemorrhagic fever.



How do you know if you were exposed?

You won't know exposure has taken place until symptoms appear 4–21 days after exposure. The diagnosis is made on symptoms and the disease pattern. Confirmatory tests on blood and tissue samples may take several days.

What should you do if you were exposed to hemorrhagic fever?



Seek prompt medical attention. Notify healthcare provider of possible exposure. Limit your exposure to others if you are ill. Monitor your health by checking for fever or rash.

Where is viral hemorrhagic fever found?

The viruses that cause VHFs are distributed over much of the globe. However, because each virus is associated with one or more particular animal host, the virus and the disease it causes are usually seen only where the host lives. Because more and more people travel each year, outbreaks of these diseases are becoming an increasing threat in places where they rarely, if ever, have been seen before.

Why are there concerns about viral hemorrhagic fever being used as a bioweapon?

Some VHF strains are very contagious, are highly fatal, and for most there is no specific cure or treatment. Onset of the illness, after exposure, can occur up to 21 days later allowing spread of the disease over a large geographic area.

Can pets and other animals get hemorrhagic fever?

Yes, animals can get hemorrhagic fever. If you think your pet has been exposed seek prompt veterinary attention for the animal. Some VHF viruses may be transmitted from animals by ticks, fleas and mosquitoes to humans.

