

For Immediate Release

July 26, 2016

“Tséhootsooí Medical Center encourages communities to become aware of hantavirus and the symptoms”

Tséhootsooí Medical Center would like to communicate to the public the awareness of Hantavirus. Lately, there have been scares of possible Hantavirus outbreaks in the local communities of Window Rock, Fort Defiance, and throughout the region. However, please remain calm and take the necessary steps to being aware of the symptoms.

Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS) is a rare but severe, sometimes fatal, respiratory disease in humans caused by infection with Hantavirus. The early symptoms can include fatigue, fever, muscle aches – especially in larger muscle groups such as thighs, hips, back, and at times the shoulders. There may also be an experience of headaches, dizziness, chills, and abdominal problems such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain.

After a period of 4 to 10 days, the later symptoms occur such as coughing and shortness of breath with the feeling of tight chest pains and difficulty to breath. This stage is when the lungs fill with fluids.

How do you catch Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS)? It is caught through the possible exposure to infected rodents by breathing in the virus located in the rodent urine or droppings, touching eyes, nose, or mouth after touching infected rodent droppings, urine, or nesting materials. Lastly, you can get HPS if you are bitten by an infected rodent. The virus cannot be spread from person to person.



Deer Mouse

Cotton Rat

Rice Rat

White-Footed Mouse

Prevention of the virus begins with you. The best way to help prevent HPS is to eliminate or minimize contact with rodents in your home, workplace, or campsite. Seal up! Trap up! Clean up!

For more information contact Tséhootsooí Medical Center - Public Health Nursing at 928.729.8471 or 928.729.8000. Also contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at 800.262.4636 or www.cdc.gov/hantavirus.

Ahee'hee!

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“To provide superior and compassionate healthcare to our community by raising the level of health, Hozho, and quality of life”

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JT Willie, Director of Marketing