

**ENDEMIC TYPHUS**  
**PREVENTION CHECKLIST**

- Keep fleas away. Consult a veterinarian for proper flea-control for pets.
- Keep yards and homes free from pests by using mists and sprays. Follow instructions closely to avoid exposure or ingestion of chemicals.
- Maintain a clean yard to discourage rats and opossums from foraging around your home.
- Cover or remove all potential food sources, including trash cans, pet food, and even fallen fruit.
- Protect yourself from germs. Wear protective clothes and masks when cleaning or distributing control mists.
- Contact the Pasadena Humane Society and SPCA at (626) 792-7151 if there are dead or live wild animals on your property.

**ABOUT THE PASADENA HUMANE SOCIETY AND SPCA**

The Pasadena Humane Society and SPCA will respond to all calls about stray and injured animals, barking dogs, dog bites, assisting homeowners with the removal of wildlife (raccoons, opossums, coyotes), and picking up dead animals on public streets.

More information is available at website [www.pasadenahumane.org](http://www.pasadenahumane.org).

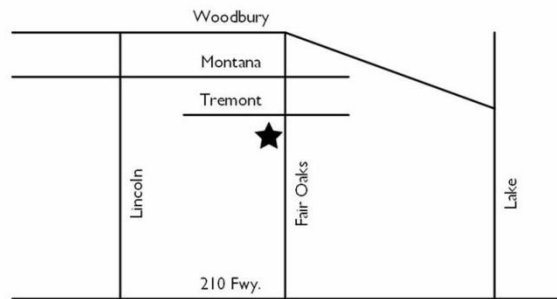


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**CITY OF PASADENA**  
**Public Health**

**DEPARTMENT**

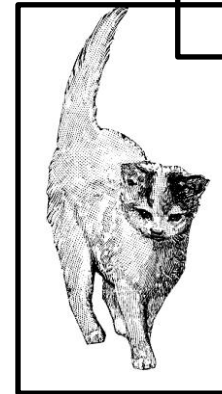
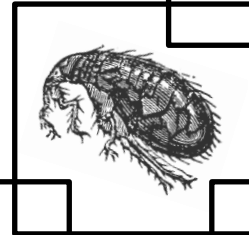
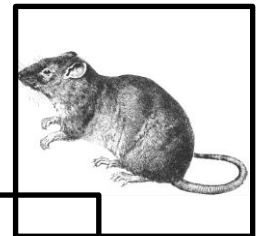
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**ENDEMIC**  
**TYPHUS**  
**FEVER**  
 (Murine Typhus)



**Environmental Health Division**  
 Pasadena Public Health Department  
 (626) 744-6004

## WHAT IS ENDEMIC TYPHUS?

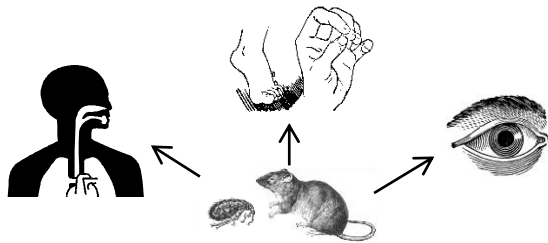
Endemic Flea-borne Typhus Fever, also known as Murine Typhus or Flea-borne Typhus, is a disease caused by the bacteria, *Rickettsia typhi* (found in infected rat fleas) and *Rickettsia felis* (found in infected cat fleas). Typhus is known to be spread particularly in the Pasadena area and some other areas of Los Angeles County.

## HOW DO I GET ENDEMIC TYPHUS?

Endemic Typhus is contracted from infected flea bites. Fleas release the bacteria in their feces and defecate when they bite. Scratching the bite site allows the bacteria to enter the bloodstream. The bacteria can sometimes enter through the eyes, nose, or mouth.

Rat fleas and some cat fleas can be infected with the bacterium that causes Endemic Typhus.

Endemic Typhus is not spread directly from person-to-person.



## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

The most common symptoms include a fever, headache, body aches, and chills. These occur about 6-14 days after exposure to an infected flea. Skin rashes are also common. Most of the illnesses are mild and may be confused with other diseases. Hospitalization due to severe illness occurs in about 10% of patients. A specific blood test must be performed to diagnose the disease.

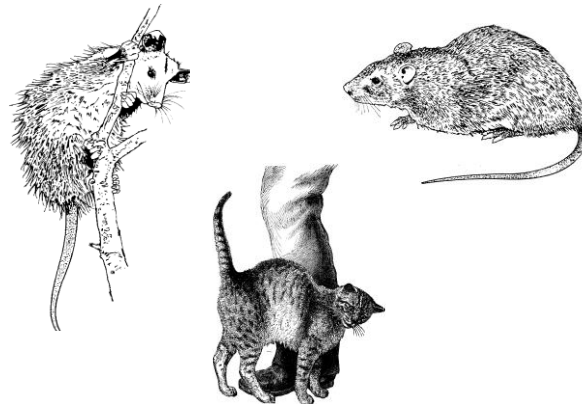
## HOW IS THE DISEASE TREATED?

Endemic Typhus Fever is treated with antibiotics. Most people recover within a few days of starting treatment. Healthcare providers will choose the appropriate antibiotic based on the symptoms and laboratory tests.

## WHICH ANIMALS CARRY THE DISEASE?

In Pasadena and around Los Angeles County, the Norway rat, opossums, and cats can carry the fleas which can harbor the disease.

These animals frequently come in contact with humans and may transmit the infected fleas onto humans and pets. The infected fleas may pass the disease to other fleas feeding on the same source. Fleas can also pass the bacteria to their offspring. Infected animals usually do not show symptoms of Endemic Typhus.



## HOW WILL I KNOW IF MY PET HAS ENDEMIC TYPHUS?

Since pets and other animals usually do not show symptoms of the disease, it is better to keep the animals free from fleas to avoid any infection.

## HOW DO I PREVENT ENDEMIC TYPHUS?

There are numerous ways of preventing the spread of Endemic Typhus:

**KEEP FLEAS AWAY.** Keep pets, yards, and homes free from fleas. Oral and topical flea medication is widely available for pets. Yards and homes should also be kept flea-free with flea-control mist, sprays, and powders.

**KEEP YARDS AND HOMES FREE FROM RATS AND OTHER ANIMALS.** Yards and homes should be kept clean and in good repair to keep rats and other animals from entering and living in these areas. Make sure there are no cracks or nesting areas where rats can access and live. Lawns should be trimmed and cleared of debris or other materials. Trash cans and other food sources (accessible pet food) can attract rats and other animals. Collect all fallen fruit from fruit trees to discourage rats from foraging.

**WEAR PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT.** When cleaning areas, wear appropriate protective gear such as gloves, masks, and goggles. Spray disinfectant or cleaning agents on nesting areas. Take precautions when cleaning out the yard or spaces under homes, as animals may have nested in these areas. Do not try to remove the animals by yourself as this may cause personal harm.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO ABOUT OPOSSUMS AND FERAL CATS?

When animals such as opossums and feral cats become pests, individuals should not attempt to capture and relocate these animals. This practice is a violation of the California Fish and Game laws and is considered inhumane. Do not relocate the animals as this can only facilitate the spread the disease. Instead, please call the Pasadena Humane Society and SPCA to report the animals.