

Brucella spp.

Brucellosis

Brucella spp. is a risk group 3 bacterium. It is considered a **reproductive pathogen** as infection significantly increases the risk of spontaneous abortion, intrauterine fetal death, chorioamnionitis, and preterm delivery. Prompt diagnosis and treatment with antibiotics are crucial to reducing adverse fetal and maternal outcomes.

How can I be exposed to *Brucella spp.*?

- Exposure occurs most commonly by ingestion, direct contact via skin abrasions and mucous membranes, and inhalation.
- Consumption of unpasteurized dairy products and direct contact with infected animal tissues.
- Laboratory workers may be exposed by exposure to aerosols, direct skin contact with cultures, ingestion, and splashes to mucous membranes.
- Vertical transmission occurs via the placenta, during delivery, or through breastfeeding.

How can I protect myself from exposure?

- Avoid direct skin contact by wearing protective clothing and gloves.
- Avoid mucous membrane exposure by using eye/face protection for procedures that may produce splashes.
- Avoid respiratory exposure by using a biosafety cabinet or other primary containment device and wearing a respirator for procedures that may produce aerosols.
- The use of needles, syringes, and other sharp objects should be strictly limited, and additional precautions should be taken when working with animals.

What should I do if I think I've been exposed?

Wash the affected area immediately for 15 minutes with soap and water and seek medical attention.

What symptoms should I look for after a potential exposure?

Symptoms include Intermittent fever, headache, weakness, profuse sweating, chills, and joint pain.

How long does it take for symptoms to develop?

Symptoms develop between 5-60 days and occasionally several months after exposure.

Is there a treatment or vaccine?

Treatment includes a regimen of antibiotics. Vaccines are not available for use in humans.

Can I transmit it to other people?

While rare, humans can transmit bacteria through sexual contact, breast milk, or blood transfusions.

Can I transmit it to my pets?

Humans could potentially contaminate the animals' environment, water, or feed, although transmission is almost exclusively from infected animals to humans.

Can it survive on surfaces?

Brucella spp. can survive for up to 135 days in animal carcasses and organs, 32 days on paper, and 125 days in soil.

See *Pathogen Safety Data Sheet* for More Information

