

Rocky mountain spotted fever essay



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The Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF) is a bacterial infection that is transmitted to the human species by a tick bite. It is rare disease but can be a serious disease if not treated properly. The Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever occurs when ticks are active in the warmer seasons of spring and summer. It is caused by a variety of ticks, depending on where you live. The bacteria *Rickettsia rickettsii* that causes RMSF is transmitted by the dog tick in the eastern United States, by the wood tick in the Rocky Mountain States, and on the West Coast, the lone star tick also can transmit the bacteria. RMSF gets its name from a rash of small red spots that begin on the wrists, ankles, palms, and soles of the feet.

In addition to the rash, the infection can cause fever, chills, muscle aches, vomiting, and nausea. RMSF is typically treated with antibiotics, and patients normally recover without complications. RMSF can cause serious health problems with late or no treatment. The symptoms of RMSF usually develop and appear within one to two weeks of a tick bite. Symptoms of RMSF usually begin suddenly. There is normally a high fever, often between 103° Fahrenheit and 105° Fahrenheit, with chills, muscle aches, and a severe headache.

Eyes may become red, muscles may feel tender, and there may be abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, poor appetite, and fatigue. The red spotted rash can begin anytime up to ten days after the fever and headache starts. It usually appears between the third and fifth day. The rash starts at the end of the limbs and then it spreads up the arms and legs toward the trunk. As the RMSF infection progresses, the red spots could start to look more like bruises, bloody dots, or patches under the skin.

Doctors usually base the diagnoses of Rocky Mountain spotted fever on the amount of symptoms that indicate the infection. RMSF is typically treated with oral or IV antibiotics, depending on how severe the infection is.

Complications, if any, may require prolonged treatment. RMSF can lead to health problems that involve the heart, lungs, and brain. In the most severe case, it can be fatal. RMSF can be prevented by avoiding tick-infested areas like woods, tall grasses, brush, shrubs, low tree branches, and by taking safety measures when spending time outdoors.

When playing outdoors, wear light-colored clothing that makes ticks more visible; also use an insect repellent that protects against ticks. Not all ticks carry the RMSF bacteria, but the longer a tick stays attached to the skin, the greater the chance it has to infect the body it is attached to. A tick usually takes hours to transfer the infection to the human. To remove a tick use tweezers to grab it by the head as close to the skin as possible, then pull steadily until the tick is removed. After removing the tick, wash your hands and the area with alcohol, cleaning the possible infected area. This prevents the transfer of the infection.

Rocky Mountain spotted fever is an infection that can be prevented with the right protection and awareness. If symptoms develop go see your doctor to prevent a serious and severe case that could be fatal. When outside be aware of the surroundings and watch for ticks. If one happens to come across a tick remove it quickly and watch over the next couple days for symptoms of RMSF. This will keep one's body healthy and infection free.

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