

Brucellosis

Agent: *Brucella* species (bacteria)

Mode of Transmission: Contamination of skin wounds with infected animal tissue or body fluids, ingestion of unpasteurized milk or milk products, and inhalation of the organism.

Signs/Symptoms: Intermittent or irregular fever, headache, chills, sweating, and muscle pain.

Prevention: Use rubber gloves when handling animal tissue. Do not consume unpasteurized dairy products, especially milk, cheese, or ice cream.

Other Important Information: Primarily an occupational disease of those working with infected animals, especially farm workers, veterinarians, and abattoir workers. Listed by the CDC as a potential bioterrorism agent because the organism may be relatively easily disseminated, may cause moderate injury or death, and may need enhanced surveillance for detection.

No cases of brucellosis were reported in Virginia in 2008. The last case of brucellosis was reported in 2005. The illness occurred in a male in the 50-59 year age group from the northern region. He had recently traveled to Mexico where he reported drinking raw goat's milk.