

Brucellosis

Agent: *Brucella* species (bacteria)

Mode of Transmission: Through 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: Rubber gloves should be used when handling animal tissue. Unpasteurized dairy products, especially milk, cheese, or ice cream, should not be consumed.

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 2010. This is less than the five cases reported in 2009, but consistent with no cases being reported between 2006 and 2008. The 5-year average for brucellosis is 1.2 cases per year. In the five cases reported in 2009, four made reference to having consumed a cheese product imported from Central America. A definitive exposure was not provided for the remaining case.