

Andes Hantavirus Health Alert

MedStar Washington Hospital Center | Children's National Hospital | Regional Emerging Special Pathogen Treatment Center



In May 2026, the WHO issued a [situation report](#) about a cluster of cases of Andes hantavirus among passengers on a cruise ship. Andes hantavirus is a rare but serious disease that can be deadly and is the only known hantavirus with confirmed person-to-person transmission. Clinicians should be mindful of the potential for Andes hantavirus in patients who have had contact with rodents, have recently traveled to South America and/or Antarctica on a cruise ship or have had contact with someone known to have Andes hantavirus.

1. Identify: When to Suspect



Travel to Argentina and the south Atlantic to Antarctica, or contact with a known hantavirus patient or rodents, within the last 14 days

and

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Chills
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Chest pain
- Abdominal pain
- Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea



2. Isolate: Protecting Personnel and the Public



Patient Isolation

- Place face mask on patient



PPE for Suspected Cases: Contact + Airborne Precautions

- Impermeable gown (AAMI Level 3 or 4) or coverall
- Gloves
- Faceshield or goggles
- Fit-tested N95 or PAPR
- Strict isolation precautions, including AIIR when available

3. Inform: Notify Local Department of Health

Clinicians should follow local protocols. Clinicians should contact your infection prevention team and local department of health.



4. Post-Transfer Issues

All exposed rooms and equipment should be cleaned and disinfected using an EPA-registered hospital-grade disinfectant while wearing PPE. Soiled laundry and trash should be handled following your organization's guidelines for special pathogens.



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Additional References: [CDC Clinical Overview](#) [NETEC](#)