

## **Brucellosis**

Agent: *Brucella* species (bacteria)

Mode of Transmission: Through ingestion of unpasteurized milk or milk products most commonly, but also may be transmitted by contamination of skin wounds with infected animal tissue or body fluids and inhalation of the organism.

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

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

Other Important Information: Considered an occupational disease of those working with infected animals, especially farm workers, veterinarians, and abattoir workers. *Brucella* is 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 2011. This is less than the five cases reported in 2009, but consistent with no cases being reported in the previous year and between 2006 and 2008. The 5-year average for brucellosis is 1.0 case per year. Of the five cases reported in 2009, four persons reported consuming a cheese product imported from Central America. A definitive exposure was not provided for the remaining case.