What is glanders?

Glanders is a disease caused by the bacterium *Burkholderia mallei*. The disease mainly affects horses, donkeys, and mules. Rarely, the bacteria spread from infected animals to humans.

Who gets glanders?

Glanders is not normally found in the United States. No naturally-occurring cases of glanders have been reported in the United States since the 1940s. The disease still occurs in other parts of the world such as Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Central and South America. People who get glanders usually have worked with animals that have the disease.

How is glanders spread?

No cases of person-to-person spread have been reported in the United States. People who get the disease usually have had close contact with an infected animal. The bacteria usually enter the body through breaks in the skin or through the eyes, nose, or mouth.

What are the symptoms of glanders?

Common symptoms of glanders include fever, muscle aches, chest pain, muscle tightness, headache, watery eyes, sensitivity to light, and nasal discharge. Symptoms can vary depending on the type of infection. Symptoms of skin infection include rashes, bumps under the skin, or open, draining wounds. Symptoms of lung infection include cough, fever, shortness of breath, or lung abscesses. When the bacteria get into the blood, symptoms include fever, chills, muscle aches, chest pain, skin rash, diarrhea or enlargement of the liver or spleen. Some people might develop a chronic infection in which symptoms come and go over a long period of time.

How soon after exposure do symptoms appear?

The appearance of symptoms depends on the type of exposure. In general, symptoms usually appear within 1–14 days after exposure.

How is glanders diagnosed?

Glanders is diagnosed through special laboratory tests. Depending on the type of glanders, samples can be taken from different parts of the body, such as blood, saliva, urine or skin lesion.

What is the treatment for glanders?

Glanders is treated with antibiotics. Healthcare providers choose the antibiotic based on the patient’s symptoms and the results of laboratory tests.

How can glanders be prevented?

There is no vaccine for glanders. In countries where glanders is common in animals, prevention of the disease in humans involves identifying and eliminating the infection in animals. When caring for

patients with glanders, healthcare providers can prevent the spread of the bacteria by using common blood and body fluid precautions, such as wearing gloves, gowns and protective eyewear.

Could glanders be used for bioterrorism?

Yes. The bacteria that cause glanders are considered possible bioterrorism agents because they could be intentionally released in the air, food, or water. If these bacteria are inhaled or ingested, they could cause severe disease.

How can I get more information about glanders?

- If you have concerns about glanders, contact your healthcare provider.
- Call your local health department. A directory of local health departments is located at https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/local-health-districts/.
- Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at http://www.cdc.gov/glanders/.

Glanders: Overview for Health Care Providers

Two page summary of: Organism, Reporting, Infectious Dose, Occurrence, Natural Reservoir, Route of Infection, Communicability, Case-fatality Rate, Risk Factors, Incubation Period, Clinical Manifestations, Differential Diagnosis, Laboratory Tests/Sample Collection, Treatment, Vaccine

Glanders: Guidance for Health Care Providers

Key Medical and Public Health Interventions After Identification of a Suspected Case

February 2019