



BOURBON VIRUS DISEASE

What is Bourbon virus disease?

Bourbon virus is an emerging tick-borne virus in the genus *Thogotovirus*. It was first reported in 2014 and named for Bourbon County, Kansas where it was first discovered.

Bourbon virus disease is not currently a nationally notifiable disease, so only a small number of cases have been reported from the Midwest and southern United States. Studies are underway to figure out if the virus might be found in other areas of the United States.

How is Bourbon virus disease spread?

Although it is not yet known how people become infected with Bourbon virus, most patients reported exposure to ticks before becoming sick. Also, the virus has been identified in Lone star ticks (*Amblyomma americanum*). The Lone star tick is Delaware's most common species of tick.

Who gets Bourbon virus disease?

Anyone who goes outside near tick habitat may be at risk.

What are the symptoms of Bourbon virus disease?

Clinical data is limited, but patients with Bourbon virus disease have reported fever, fatigue (feeling tired), decreased appetite, headache, nausea, diarrhea, anorexia, and maculopapular rash. Some people also have lower than normal counts of white blood cells and platelets.

How soon do symptoms occur?

Scientists are still learning about Bourbon virus, so they do not know the incubation time yet.

Should an infected person be excluded from work or school?

An infected person does not need to be excluded from work or school.

How is Bourbon virus disease diagnosed?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends speaking with your health care provider about your symptoms if you believe that you are infected with the Bourbon virus. There are blood tests available to help determine if someone was infected. Additional testing guidance can be found in the resources section at the end of this document.



What is the treatment for Bourbon virus disease?

There are no medicines or treatments for Bourbon virus disease. Rest, fluids, and over-the-counter pain medications may relieve some symptoms.

What can a person or community do to prevent the spread of Bourbon virus disease?

The most important way to prevent your chances of becoming infected with Bourbon virus is to prevent tick bites:

- Wear light-colored clothing when outdoors.
- Tuck pant legs into socks so ticks cannot crawl up the inside of the pants.
- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE).
- Treat clothing and gear with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Permethrin can be used to treat boots, clothing, and camping gear and it remains protective through several washings. Alternatively, you can buy permethrin-treated clothing and gear.
- When outdoors, stay on the center of trails. Ticks crawl on the tips of grasses and shrubs and crawl on people and animals when they brush against the vegetation.

Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/bourbon-virus/index.html>

Testing guidance from Louisiana Department of Health, <https://ldh.la.gov/assets/oph/Center-PHCH/Center-CH/infectious-epi/EpiManual/HeartlandBourbonBackgroundTesting.pdf>