

Insert agency name

Insert logo

Insert agency address

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Insert date)

For information, contact:
(Insert contact information)

Headline

(Insert information about the event)

Local authorities believe that people who were at (insert location) on (insert date and time) may have been exposed to the bacteria that causes pneumonic plague. Public Health and other local authorities are investigating this incident.

Pneumonic plague is an infectious disease caused when the bacterium *Yersinia pestis* infects the lungs. The symptoms of illness are fever, headache, weakness and rapidly developing pneumonia with shortness of breath, chest pain, cough and sometimes bloody or watery sputum. The pneumonia progresses for 2 to 4 days and may cause respiratory failure and shock. Without early treatment, patients may die.

Early treatment of pneumonic plague is essential. To reduce the chance of death, antibiotics must be given within 24 hours of first symptoms. Streptomycin, gentamicin, the tetracyclines, and chloramphenicol are all effective against pneumonic plague. Antibiotic treatment for 7 days will protect people who have had direct, close contact with infected patients. Wearing a close-fitting surgical mask also protects against infection.

If you believe you have been exposed, or if you have any of the symptoms associated with pneumonic plague, please see a healthcare provider immediately.

Public Health may open a mass medication dispensing site. That will be determined in the coming days, and the public will be informed as soon as that decision is made. Please stay tuned to local radio and TV stations for more information.