

## Scrub Typhus Fever (mite-borne)

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### **What is scrub typhus fever?**

Scrub typhus fever is a disease caused by bacteria called *Orientia tsutsugamushi*.

### **Who gets scrub typhus fever?**

Scrub typhus fever occurs most commonly among people in contact with overgrown terrain, forest clearings, reforested areas, and new settlements in certain areas of Asia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Japan, Australia, northern China, and Korea.

### **How is scrub typhus fever spread?**

Scrub typhus fever is not directly spread from person-to-person. Disease is spread to people by the bite of a mite infected with the bacteria that causes scrub typhus fever.

### **Could scrub typhus fever be used for bioterrorism?**

No. However, *Rickettsia prowazekii*, the bacteria that causes epidemic typhus fever, is considered an agent that could be used for bioterrorism.

### **What are the symptoms of scrub typhus fever?**

Symptoms may include a sore on the skin with a “punched out” appearance (skin ulcer) at the site where the mite attached. Several days after the appearance of the ulcer, other symptoms may develop which include fever, headache, sweating, blood-shot eyes, swollen lymph nodes, rash, lung infection, vomiting, and diarrhea.

### **How soon after exposure do symptoms appear?**

Symptoms usually appear within 10 to 12 days after exposure, but may appear anywhere from 6 to 21 days after exposure.

### **How is scrub typhus fever diagnosed and treated?**

The diagnosis of scrub typhus fever is based on signs and symptoms of illness, as well as laboratory tests. It is important to tell the healthcare provider about travel to any countries where scrub typhus fever may occur.

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

### **Is there a vaccine for scrub typhus fever?**

There is currently no commercially available vaccine for scrub typhus fever.

### **Where can I get more information about scrub typhus fever?**

More information about scrub typhus fever is available on the Virginia Department of Health website at [www.vdh.virginia.gov](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov) or through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention websites at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or [www.cdc.gov/travel/diseases/rickettsial.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/diseases/rickettsial.htm).