

What are Human monocytotropic ehrlichiosis and Human granulocytic anaplasmosis?

These diseases are caused by two similar, but distinct, bacteria. Both illnesses are spread by ticks with symptoms similar to Rocky Mountain spotted fever. The illness can range from mild to severe and can possibly become life threatening.

What are the symptoms of Human ehrlichiosis?

Human ehrlichiosis can cause a sudden high fever, severe headache, fever and shaking chills. Loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle aches and mental confusion may also occur. A rash is not usually present. Pneumonia-like symptoms may develop.

How soon do symptoms appear?

The fever and headache usually appear 1 - 2 weeks after a tick bite.

How is ehrlichiosis spread?

People get ehrlichiosis from ticks, usually by a tick bite. Some people become ill after crushing a tick with their hands because its body fluids get into cuts or scratches in the skin. Ehrlichiosis cannot spread from person to person or from dogs to people. However dogs can bring infected ticks into close contact with people.

Who gets ehrlichiosis?

Anyone can get ehrlichiosis, especially if they spend a lot of time outdoors.

How long is a person infectious?

Ehrlichiosis is not spread from person to person.

What is the treatment for these illnesses?

Antibiotics such as tetracycline or chloramphenicol are used to treat both human monocytotropic ehrlichiosis and human granulocytic anaplasmosis.

Do infected people need to be excluded from school, work, or child care?

No.

What can be done to help prevent the spread of Human ehrlichiosis and Human granulocytic ehrlichiosis?

1. Don't walk bare-legged in tall grass or woods where ticks may be found.
2. If outdoors in an area where ticks may be found, wear a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, and high socks. Tuck pants legs into socks. Wear light-colored clothing so ticks can be seen more easily.
3. Conduct "tick checks" every two to three hours if spending a lot of time outdoors. Check all of your skin for ticks every day (you may need help to do this). The ticks are most often found on the thigh, arms, underarms, and legs. Ticks are very small, so look for new "freckles."
4. Use tick repellents containing the ingredients DEET for skin applications, (use precautions and appropriate products for small children) or Permethrin (on clothing). Always follow the directions on the container. These repellents can be found at any local drugstore. Wash off all repellents after going indoors.
5. Remove any attached ticks immediately, using the following method.

How should a tick be removed?

- Any tick should be removed as soon as possible. The best way is to use tweezers to grab the tick as close to the skin as possible and pull it straight out. Do not squeeze the tick's body when removing it. Do not handle ticks with bare hands. Wash your hands after removing a tick. You may want to apply an antiseptic to the bite. Once removed, the tick should be drowned in rubbing alcohol or the toilet.