

FACTS ABOUT PLAGUE IN CALIFORNIA



Plague is a highly infectious bacterial disease which primarily affects rodents. Humans and their pets (dogs, and especially cats) can get plague if they visit or live in areas where wild rodents are naturally infected. The disease may also occur in rats that can live in close contact with people.

This is the same disease that ravaged Europe in the 6th Century (the Plague of Justinian) and again in the 14th Century (the Black Death). At the present time, plague in humans is relatively rare, and can be treated successfully with modern antibiotics. However, it is vital that the disease be diagnosed and treated in its early stages. If not, it is often fatal and, if lung infection (plague pneumonia) develops, it can be transmitted directly and rapidly to others.