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Plague (Yersinia pestis) 1996 Case Definition | CDC  
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Plague (  
Yersinia pestis  
)  
1996 Case Definition  
Plague (  
Yersinia pestis  
)  
1996 Case Definition  
NOTE:  
A surveillance case definition is a set of uniform criteria used to define a disease for public health surveillance. Surveillance case definitions enable public health officials to classify and count cases consistently across reporting jurisdictions. Surveillance case definitions are not intended to be used by healthcare providers for making a clinical diagnosis or determining how to meet an individual patient’s health needs.  
CSTE Position Statement(s)  
09-ID-52  
Clinical Description  
Plague is transmitted to humans by fleas or by direct exposure to infected tissues or respiratory droplets; the disease is characterized by fever, chills, headache, malaise, prostration, and leukocytosis that manifests in one or more of the following principal clinical forms:  
Regional lymphadenitis (bubonic plague)  
Septicemia without an evident bubo (septicemic plague)  
Plague pneumonia, resulting from hematogenous spread in bubonic or septicemic cases (secondary pneumonic plague) or inhalation of infectious droplets (primary pneumonic plague)  
Pharyngitis and cervical lymphadenitis resulting from exposure to larger infectious droplets or ingestion of infected tissues (pharyngeal plague)  
Laboratory Criteria For Diagnosis  
Presumptive  
Elevated serum antibody titer(s) to  
Yersinia pestis  
fraction 1 (F1) antigen (without documented fourfold or greater change) in a patient with no history of plague vaccination,  
OR  
Detection of F1 antigen in a clinical specimen by fluorescent assay  
Confirmatory  
Isolation of  
Y. pestis  
from a clinical specimen,  
OR  
Fourfold or greater change in serum antibody titer to  
Y. pestis  
F1 antigen  
Case Classification  
Suspected  
A clinically compatible case without presumptive or confirmatory laboratory results  
Probable  
A clinically compatible case with presumptive laboratory results  
Confirmed  
A clinically compatible case with confirmatory laboratory results  
Comments  
The 1996 case definition appearing on this page was re-published in the 2009 CSTE position statement 09-ID-52. Thus, the 1996 and 2010 versions of the case definition are identical.  
Related Case Definition(s)  
Plague (  
Yersinia pestis  
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Plague (  
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NNDSS receives and shares case data from state, local, and territorial health departments to help public health monitor, control, and prevent serious diseases.  
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