

Yosemite hantavirus deaths at 3; more people at risk

By BBC

An additional 12,000 people who stayed at a remote campsite in California's Yosemite National Park are at risk from the deadly hantavirus, officials warn.

The warning comes as a West Virginian who visited the park in June became the third person to die from the virus.

Eight cases have been confirmed so far. There is no known cure for the virus, spread by infected rodent droppings.

Symptoms can take up to six weeks to show and one third of cases are fatal.

Yosemite National Park said it was getting about 1,000 calls per day to its hantavirus hotline from frightened visitors.

The hantavirus virus is carried in rodent faeces, urine and saliva. When it dries out and mixes with dust, it can be inhaled by humans, especially in small spaces.

The disease can also spread if people touch or eat contaminated substances, or are bitten by an infected animal.

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