

PREVENT



Rat Lungworm Disease

Rat lungworm disease is caused by a parasite, *Angiostrongylus cantonensis*, which is spread by rats. People can get rat lungworm disease by accidentally eating tiny slugs and snails on unrinsed, raw produce that are infected with the parasite. People can also get sick by eating undercooked snails, freshwater crabs, prawns, frogs, or crayfish that are infected.

You can help prevent rat lungworm disease by doing the following:



WASH PRODUCE: Thoroughly inspect and rinse all fruits and vegetables under running water. For leafy greens, check each leaf carefully for tiny slugs and snails, and wash carefully.



KILL SLUGS & SNAILS: Apply slug bait according to label directions. Keep pets and children away from the poison. Throw away dead slugs and snails. Do not touch them with your bare hands; use gloves.



CONTROL RATS: Use bait and traps to catch rats. Follow label directions. Keep pets and children away from the poison.



COOK FOOD: Boil snails, freshwater crabs, prawns, frogs, and crayfish for at least 3-5 minutes before eating.



COVER TANKS & CONTAINERS: Cover and protect your catchment tank. Always cover your drink containers to prevent slugs and snails from crawling inside.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS



Rat Lungworm Disease



Not everyone will have the same symptoms. Symptoms usually start 1 to 3 weeks after infection. Illness can last for 2 to 8 weeks or longer.

- Severe ongoing headache
- Nausea and vomiting
- Neck and back stiffness
- Tingling or painful skin
- Low-grade fever
- Although rare, coma and death

Children may have behavioral changes such as unusually bad temper, mood changes, or extreme tiredness.

See your doctor as soon as possible if you think you may have been infected.



For more information
call the Disease Reporting Line
(808) 586-4586
or visit: www.health.hawaii.gov

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