



# FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE

1-888-EXT-INFO



## *Frequently asked questions about foot-and-mouth disease*

### 1. What is foot-and-mouth disease?

FMD does not have human health significance. It is a highly contagious viral disease of cattle, sheep, swine, goats, deer and other cloven-hoofed animals that causes blisters on the mouth, teats and soft tissues of the feet. The disease is not hoof-and-mouth because the virus never attacks the animal's hoof. Infected animals have difficulty eating and walking. They lose weight rapidly. They suffer production loss from which they rarely recover.

### 2. Can people get foot-and-mouth disease? Are the meat and milk safe to consume?

FMD is not a significant health risk to people. Meat and milk of infected animals are safe to consume. They may be dangerous as sources of infection to susceptible animals. People can carry the disease on their clothes and shoes, and also spread the disease to susceptible animals. The virus can exist in a person's nose for up to 28 hours after exposure to infected animals and be spread through the air.

### 3. Is FMD the same as mad cow disease?

No, they are completely different diseases. FMD is a highly contagious viral disease of cloven-hoofed animals. It does not have human health significance. Mad cow disease, technically known as Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), is believed to be caused by a protein called a prion and affects the central nervous system of cattle. It was transmitted among

cattle in Britain by the practice of feeding rendered protein, such as meat and bone meal, to cattle as a nutritional supplement. This practice has been banned in the United States since October 1997. Prions are highly stable; they resist freezing, drying, and heating at normal cooking temperatures. The FMD virus is fragile and easily killed by disinfectants.

In Great Britain, a human disease, called New-Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, has been attributed to consumption of BSE-infected beef. Mad cow disease has never been diagnosed in the United States. The United States has an active testing program in place. FMD was last seen in the United States in 1929. See the chart on the back for a comparison of these two diseases.

### 4. How is FMD controlled?

FMD is best controlled by efforts to keep the disease out of our country. Importation of meat products or infected animals from FMD-affected countries is prohibited. Contact should be limited between susceptible animals in the United States and people traveling from these countries. Strict bio-safety procedures should be practiced on farms and at animal exhibits as well as airports and other sites of foreign travel entrance into the United States.

Vaccination for FMD is possible, but because the virus mutates quickly, vaccination isn't always effective.

### 5. What is being done to prevent FMD from entering the United States and Indiana?

The United States Department of Agriculture is working with the U.S. Customs Service to monitor all points of entry for international travelers. They want to make sure the public is aware of this disease and helps contain it.

In Indiana, the State Board of Animal Health is working with the USDA, Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service and private veterinarians. They are making livestock producers aware of early disease symptoms and ways to prevent FMD on their farms. The BOAH has increased surveillance at livestock markets, meat processing plants, on farms and at all major importation sites to the state.

If FMD gets to the United States, rapid initiation of isolation and quarantine procedures will limit the damage in our animal population.

### 6. What can you do?

Follow USDA guidelines if you are traveling internationally to FMD-affected countries. Avoid farms, stockyards, zoos and livestock fairs in countries affected by FMD. Wait five days after your arrival to the United States before contact with FMD-susceptible animals. Launder and dry-clean all of your clothes after the trip. Clean shoes, luggage and personal items with a bleach solution of five tablespoons of household bleach and one gallon of water.

Stay informed about FMD through television, radio, newspapers, magazines and the Internet.

**What are the differences between mad cow disease and foot-and-mouth disease?**

	<b>Mad cow disease</b>	<b>Foot-and-mouth disease</b>
<b>Description of the disease</b>	Mad cow disease, technically called Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), is a fatal and degenerative disease in cattle that affects the central nervous system. It is believed to be caused by a protein called a prion.	Foot-and-mouth disease is a highly contagious disease that affects cattle, sheep, swine, goats, deer and other cloven-hoofed animals. A virus causes FMD.
<b>Symptoms</b>	Affected animals may stumble, show aggression, and walk awkwardly. The disease is progressive and all affected animals die.	Blisters form in the mouth and on the tongue, as well as on the soft tissue of the feet. Other signs of infection are lameness, fever and drooling. Affected animals may smack their lips in a characteristic way. Few animals die of the disease, but they suffer permanent impairment of productivity.
<b>How animals get the disease</b>	Cattle eat the protein of other BSE-infected animals. The United States banned feeding such protein to cattle and sheep.	Animals come in contact with the virus from other infected animals. People can carry the virus on their clothes, shoes and bodies.
<b>Effects on people</b>	Scientists believe BSE-infected meat can cause a fatal illness in people. The disease is called New-Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.	FMD does not have human health significance.
<b>Status in the United States</b>	The United States has never diagnosed a cow or other animal with BSE.	Foot-and-mouth disease has not been diagnosed in the United States since 1929.

- **U.S. Department of Agriculture**

*For technical questions call:* 1-800-601-9327

*For consumer and travel questions call:* 1-866-SAFEGUARD

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/oa/fmd/index.html>

- **Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service**

*Knowledge to Go:* 1-888-EXT-INFO (1-888-398-4636)

- **Indiana State Board of Animal Health**

<http://www.state.in.us/boah>

317-227-0300

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