



South Dakota
Department of Health
Hantavirus Situation Update

May 21, 2026

Hantavirus (Andes Virus) Outbreak on a Cruise Ship

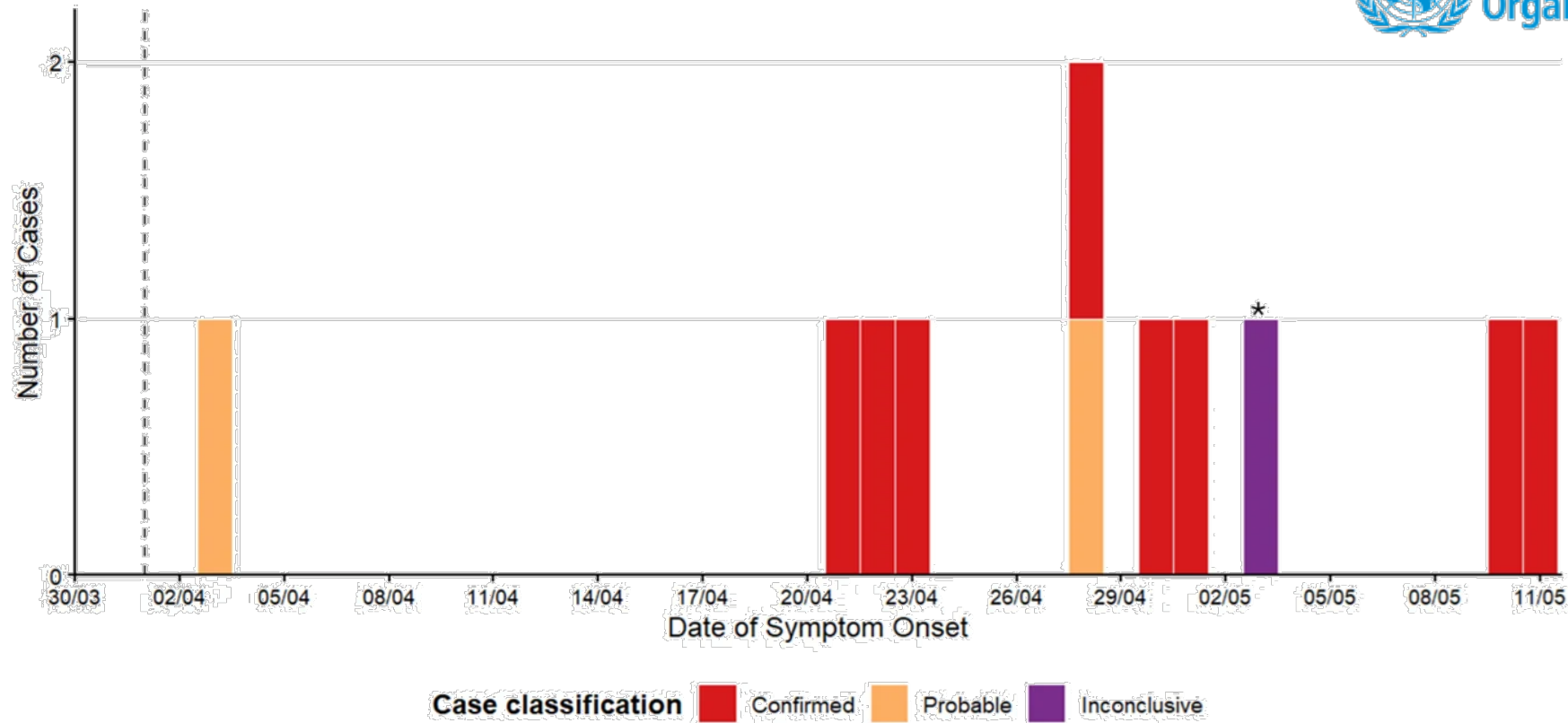
Situation

- **May 2:** CDC and international partners alerted to an **Andes virus** outbreak associated with the **MV Hondius cruise ship** that departed from Argentina
- **Case count*:** 11 cases (9 confirmed, 2 probable)
 - All cases have been in passengers onboard the MV Hondius
- **Deaths:** 3
- To date, no hantavirus cases due to Andes virus have been confirmed in the United States as a result of this outbreak

*As of May 21, 2026



Hantavirus (Andes Virus) Outbreak on a Cruise Ship

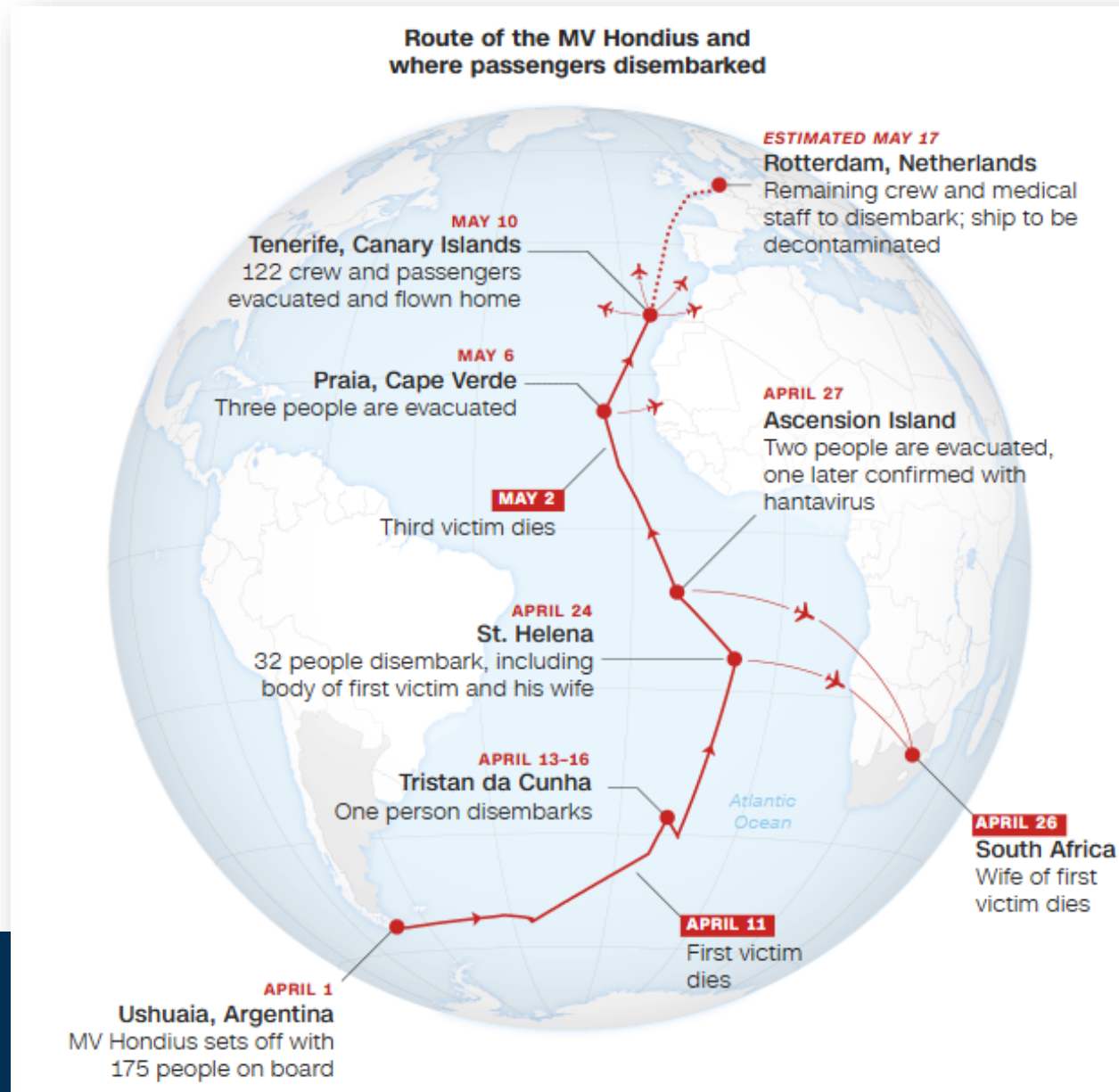


*Date of sampling

Data source: WHO | Generated: 2026-05-12



Hantavirus Outbreak on a Cruise Ship



Last updated: May 12, 2026, at 6 a.m. ET.

Sources: World Health Organization; Oceanwide Expeditions; MarineTraffic; National Department of Health, South Africa
Graphic: Henrik Pettersson, CNN



Hantavirus (Andes Virus) Outbreak on a Cruise Ship

- **May 11:** US Citizens repatriated to Nebraska (18)
- 41+ persons under monitoring
 - Cruise ship passengers
 - Flight passenger contacts
 - 11+ states currently monitoring passengers
- Risk to the public: **Very Low**



Hantavirus (Andes Virus) Outbreak on a Cruise Ship

Andes virus

- Type of hantavirus spread by rodents in **South America** (Argentina and Chile)
 - The rodents that carry Andes virus have NOT been found in the U.S.
- Only type of hantavirus that is known to spread person-to-person
 - Usually limited to people of have prolonged, close contact with a case – such as direct physical contact, prolonged time spent in close or enclosed spaces, and exposure to bodily fluids from an ill person



Hantavirus - Background

Hantaviruses are a family of viruses that can cause serious and potentially fatal respiratory disease

- More than 20 different strains have been found in different places around the world

United States: **Sin Nombre** virus is the major strain

- Carried by certain mice species
- Not spread from person-to-person

South America: **Andes** virus

- Carried by certain rodents found in Argentina and Chile
- Only type of hantavirus that is known to spread person-to-person



Long-tailed pygmy rice rat
(*Oligoryzomys longicaudatus*)
Carrier in South America

Photo courtesy: Joel Sartore



Hantavirus – Mice & Risk in South Dakota

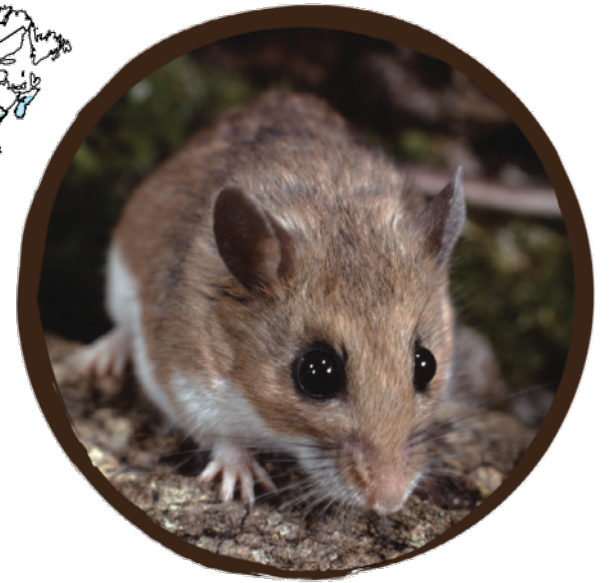
Deer Mice and White Footed Mice are carriers of **Sin Nombre** virus in South Dakota



Deer Mouse
Peromyscus maniculatus

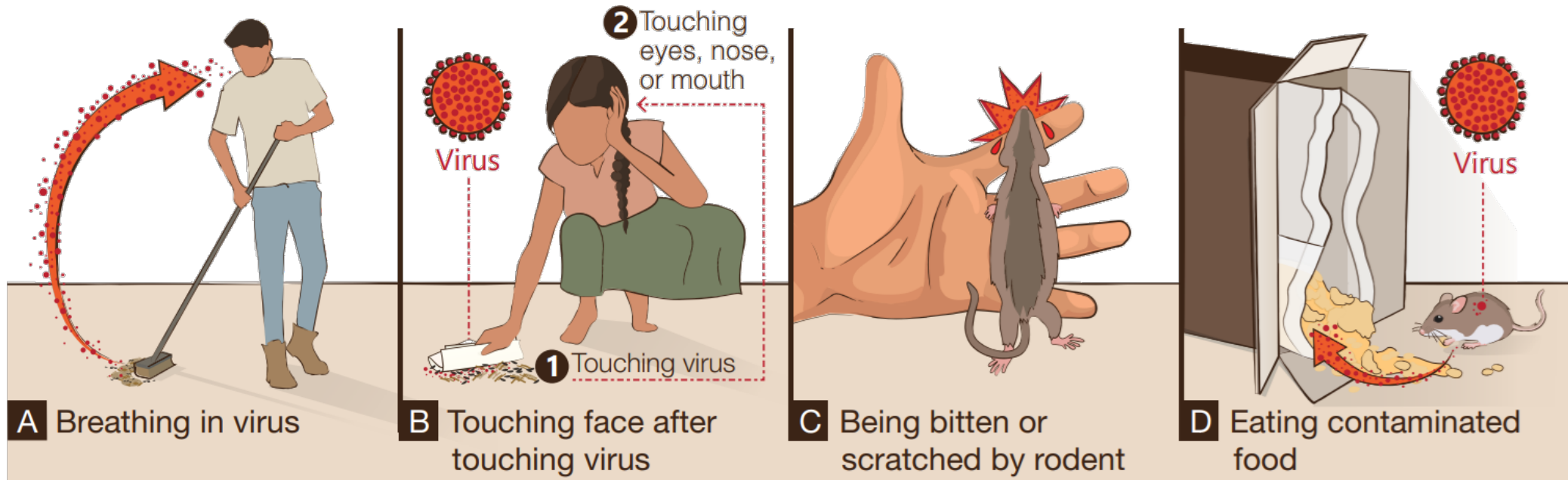


White Footed Mouse
Peromyscus leucopus



Hantavirus - Transmission

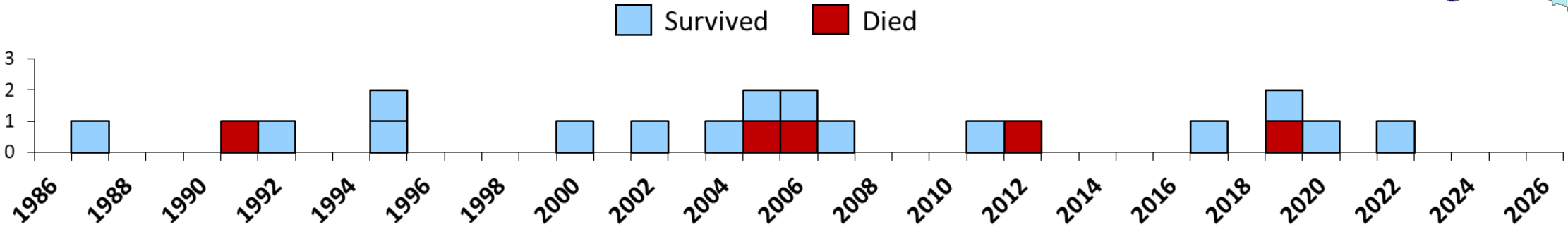
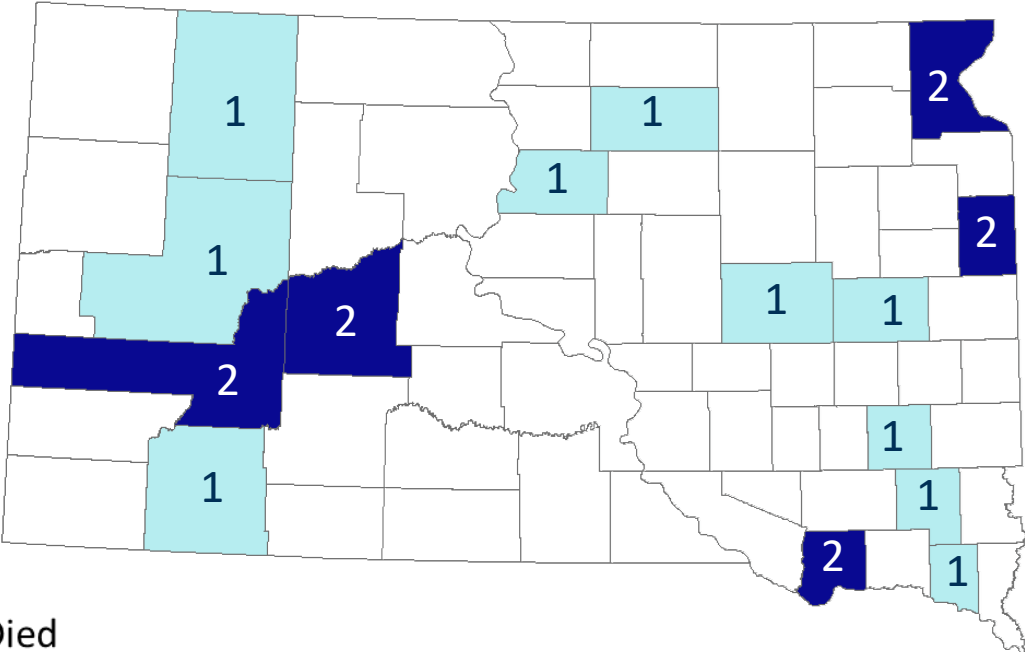
For the **Sin Nombre** virus and other hantaviruses found in the United States, persons can be infected by:



Hantavirus – South Dakota (1987–2026*)

20 cases of Hantavirus reported in South Dakota

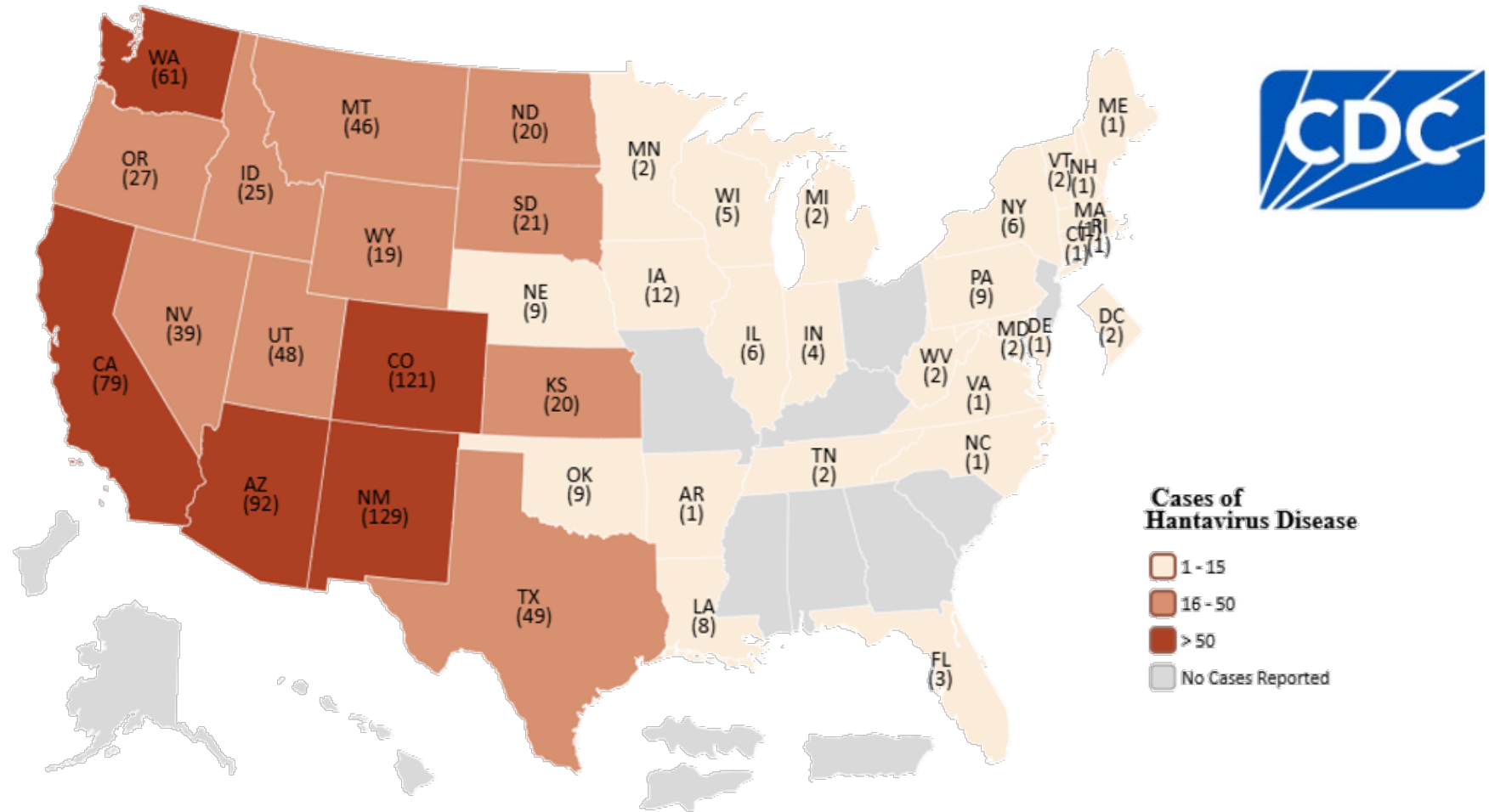
- **Deaths:** 5 (25%)
- **Age:** median 28 years (range 7–76)
- **Sex:** Male 70%, Female 30%
- **Race:** White 80%, American Indian 20%



*As of May 21, 2026



Hantavirus – United States (1993–2023)



Hantavirus – Signs & Symptoms

Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS)

- Early symptoms include fatigue, fever, muscle aches, headache, and sometimes abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea
- **4 to 10 days** after illness onset, respiratory symptoms develop (cough and dyspnea) due to pulmonary edema and severe hypoxemia that rapidly progresses

The presence of a productive cough or other upper respiratory symptoms (rhinorrhea, sinusitis, sneezing) at the onset of illness is NOT consistent with a hantavirus infection



Hantavirus-Clinical Course

- Symptoms can occur within 4 days and up to 42 days after exposure (**Andes** Virus)
 - 1-8 weeks for **Sin Nombre** virus
- People with a high risk exposure need strict quarantine for 42 days
- Early admission to ICU (before diagnosis is confirmed)
- May progress rapidly to severe hypotension and respiratory failure within 24 hours



Hantavirus – Treatment & Clinical Care

- Up to 40% of cases who develop severe respiratory symptoms die
- Early recognition and escalation of care are critical
- No medications available to treat the virus-supportive care
- Mechanical ventilation and ECMO-capable facilities may be needed for critically ill patients



Laboratory Diagnostics

- Diagnosis
 - IgM/IgG serology
 - rRT-PCR assay is available at the Nebraska Public Health Laboratory
- CDC is the preferred laboratory for **Andes** virus testing
- Test only symptomatic individuals
- All Hantavirus testing requires pre-approval



Infection Prevention and Control

- Hantavirus (**Sin Nombre** virus):
 - Standard precautions
 - Not transmitted from person to person
- Hantavirus (**Andes** virus):
 - Patient placement in AIIR (Airborne Infection Isolation Room)
 - Due to potential respiratory compromise and using aerosol generating procedures for treatment
 - Use gown, gloves, eye protection, and N95 respiratory
 - Frequent hand hygiene is essential
 - Potential for person to person spread



Preparedness Activities

- Plans
 - Emergency Operations Plan
 - Infectious Disease Emergency Response Plan Annex
- Resources
 - Stockpile supplies and equipment available to support frontline healthcare workers and patient care needs.
- Outreach & Coordination
 - Maintaining situational awareness with healthcare partners, local public health agencies, and the Healthcare Preparedness Coalition.
 - Notification and coordination with Sanford Health as the SD assessment facility.



Key Takeaways

- Hantavirus is not a new disease
 - States, including SD, have managed hantavirus cases
- DOH is working with CDC
 - CDC released medical and public health guidance
 - CDC distributed a [Health Alert](#)
- DOH will support the US hantavirus response
 - US might see new cases and contacts from past cruise/flight exposures



Questions?

- Contact Epidemiology@state.sd.us
- Visit <https://www.cdc.gov/hantavirus/about/andesvirus.html>

