

LASSA FEVER EPIDEMIC IN NIGERIA: THE NATIONAL HOSPITAL ABUJA (NHA) EXPERIENCE

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Lassa Fever.....

Background

- First Discovered in 1969
- Endemic in parts of West Africa
- Caused by an RNA virus/
Arenaviridae
- Zoonotic infection/Mastomys rodents
- 100,000-300,000 cases and 5000
deaths/year



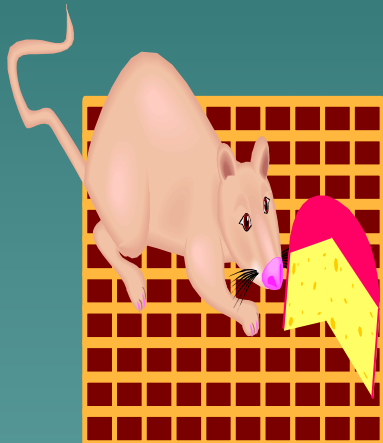
Mastomys natalensis





LASSA FEVER.....

- Human infections caused by:
 - Exposure to rodent excrement
 - Inhale urine polluted dust
 - Contaminated food
 - Wound exposure



Person-to-Person spread

- Nosocomial (hospital setting)
- Contact infected blood
- Contact contaminated medical devices



Lassa Fever....

◆ SYMPTOMS

80% Asymptomatic

Early infection (gradual onset)

- **Fever (100%)**
- **Chills/rigors**
- **Headaches(50%)**
- **Myalgia(50%)**
- Sore-throat

Second week

- Chest pain
- **Abdominal pains**
- Cough
- Vomiting

Other Symptoms

- **Seizures**
- **Loss of consciousness**
- **Bleeding(15-30%)**
- **Hearing loss**
- **Dizziness**

Lassa Fever

SIGNS

Early:

- Fever
- Pharyngeal erythema
- Flushing of face and neck

Late:

- Petechiae
- Conjunctival erythema
- Generalised adenopathy

Severe Acute phase:

- Hypotension
- Seizures
- Oliguria/Anuria
- Relative bradycardia

Lassa Fever Infection.....

Case Definition (W.H.O.):

High grade fever > 38 C

(lasting over 2weeks

Plus....

- ✓ pharyngitis
- ✓ conjunctivitis
- ✓ bleeding/edema
- ✓ ↑ Ast/ proteinuria

Lassa Fever Infection.....

Case Management

suspect Lassa fever

isolate patient

alert health facility/State Epid.

limit staff contact

standard precautions

investigations

treatment

Lassa Fever...

The National Hospital Abuja Experience

2007....1 case no staff infection

2008.....3 cases ,,

2009.....5 cases 3 nurses symptomatic
(30 positive for LV)

Accomplishments

....screening
.....prophylaxis
....education
....surveillance

Challenges

-poor supply of PPE's
-lack of proper isolation
-lack of diagnostic lab.
-significant staff infection
-poor staff attitude

Lassa Fever.....

RECAP:

- Epidemic prone dx/ West African region
- Zoonotic infection/mastomys rodents
- Good hygiene reduces risk of infection
- Applying standard precautions prevents noso-comial transmission
- Risk of Bioterrorism with Lassa virus
- High index of suspicion even in the Lassa unknown regions...**globalisation in medicine**



Thank you for Listening