
GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF ANIMAL HEALTH
Mexico-United States Commission for Prevention of Foot-and-Mouth Disease
and other Animal Exotic Diseases

MYXOMATOSIS

Myxomatosis is a highly contagious viral disease that only affects domestic and wild rabbits of the *Oryctolagus cuniculus* species, and it is characterized by causing head tumors in infected animals.

What is its geographical distribution?

This disease is found in Australia and in some South American and European countries.

Who or what causes it?

It is caused by a *Myxoma* virus of the Poxviridae family.

How is the virus transmitted?

The virus is found in ocular, nasal and genital secretions of infected animals. It can be transmitted by direct contact or by fomites, like individuals, vehicles, materials or equipment; however, the main form of transmission is through hematophagous arthropods such as mosquitoes, horseflies, fleas and lice, among others.

What are the clinical signs?

Rabbits present anorexia, serous nasal secretion, conjunctivitis, eyelids, vulva, prepuce, scrotum and perianal area inflammation; moreover, cutaneous nodules (tumors) appear in the head, causing the ears to drop due to the weight and giving their faces a “lionhead” appearance.

The death of infected animals occurs between 10 to 12 days after the onset of the disease.

How is the disease diagnosed?

It is difficult to clinically distinguish myxomatosis from other diseases caused by *Bordetella bronchiseptica*, *Pasteurella multocida* and *Mannheimia haemolytica*; therefore, it is necessary to diagnose in an official laboratory.

How can it be prevented?

Mexico is free of myxomatosis; thus, it is necessary to control the import of animals and their products and byproducts, and bolster biosafety measures in production units.

SENASICA carries out a permanent epidemiological surveillance aimed to timely detect animal diseases endangering livestock assets and the public health of our country.

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Report immediately to the official veterinarian services about any suspicious case; an official veterinarian will visit the production unit, obtain the samples for laboratory diagnosis and give the appropriate instructions.

Contact us for more information or to report any suspicious cases:

Emergency phone: 01 (800) 751 2100
(24 hours/day - 365 days/year)

Phone: 01 (55) 5905 1000
(Extensions 51236, 51242 and 51243)

E-mail addresses:
sive.dgsa@senasica.gob.mx
gestioncpa.dgsa@senasica.gob.mx

You can also report at any SADER or SENASICA offices, or at the Regional Coordination Offices of the CPA closest to your community.