Wild Tiger Health Centre Information Sheet

Disease threat: Yersinia pestis

Hazard description: A gram-negative rod causing 'plague' of humans.

Host species: Rodents are the reservoir hosts; humans, domesticated and other wild animals are considered accidental hosts (Speck 2012a).

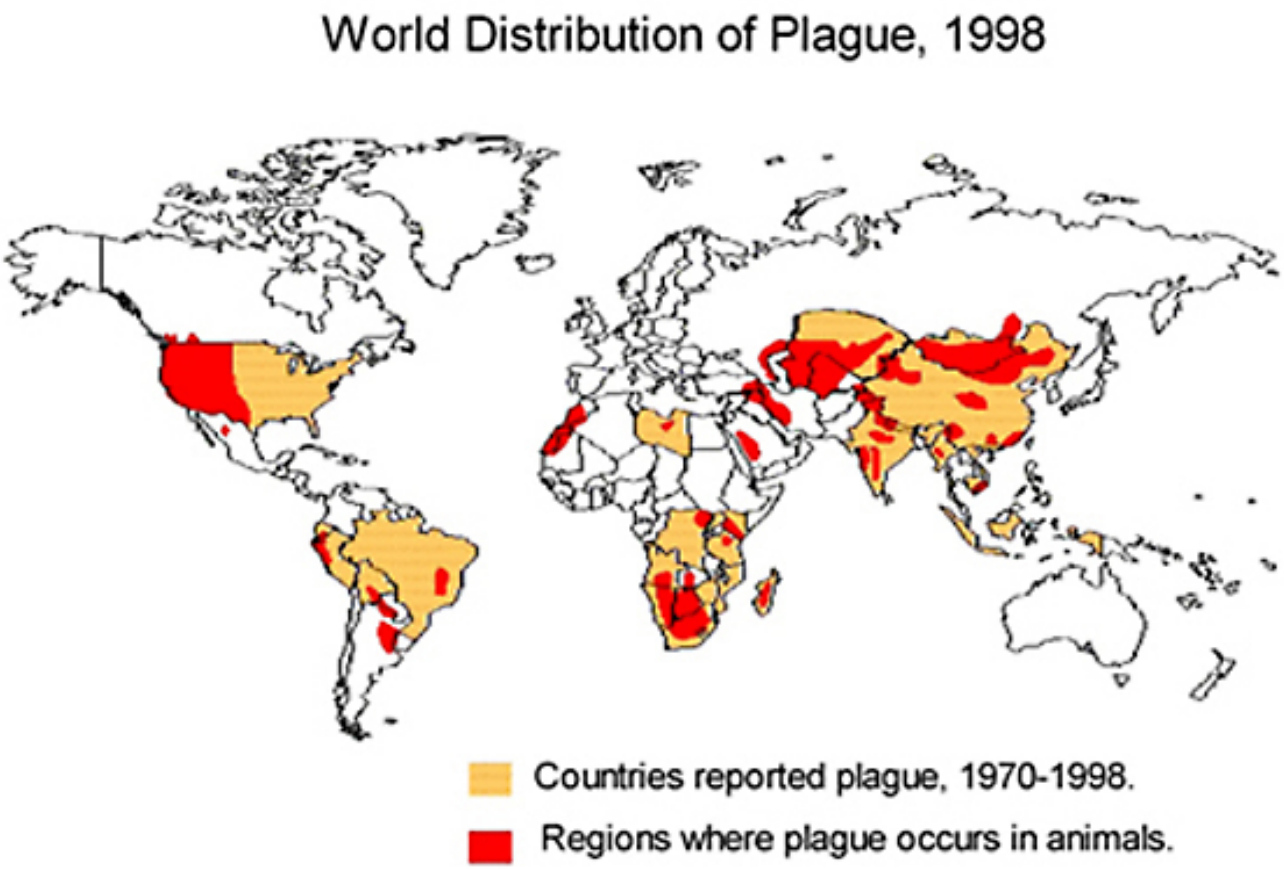
Pathogenesis: Infection is transmitted by fleas, but ingestion is possible and aerosol inhalation has been reported in a human following *post-mortem* examination of an infected cougar (Wong et al. 2009). Most mammals suffer the bubonic form, affecting regional lymph nodes. In domestic cats 33% mortality within 10 days of infection has been reported (Speck 2012a).
Serological evidence of exposure (Paul-Murphy et al. 1994; Elbroch et al, 2020) and fatal disease have both been reported in free-ranging cougars in USA (ProMED-mail 2010; Elbroch et al, 2020).
Environmental survival is also a feature (Eisen et al. 2008).

Diagnosis: Specialised laboratories for culture. Serology.

Vaccination: None.

Free-ranging tiger occurrence: No reports found. Exposure risk for tigers likely to be from consumption of rodent prey and contact with their ectoparasites. Rodent prey consumption is more likely in the winter months in RFE/China tiger range states when food may be in short supply.

Distribution: See map – not current, but indicates likely to be present in tiger range states, perhaps excluding RFE/northern China.



Accessed from: http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/235627-overview#a6

Assumptions: None.

Limitations: Wild felid susceptibility (with the exception of cougars in North America) largely unknown.