



YERSINIOSIS

What is it?

Yersiniosis is an intestinal infection that can mimic appendicitis.

Caused by:

The Yersinia bacterium causes yersiniosis. There are many different types of Yersinia; however, the two main types are Yersinia Enterocolitica and Yersinia Pseudotuberculosis. It occurs worldwide and is associated with sick puppies and kittens, raw pork, and un-pasteurized milk products.

Symptoms:

The main symptom is diarrhea (watery, sometimes bloody stool). You may also have a fever, abdominal pain, headache, poor appetite and vomiting. Symptoms may last 1 to 3 weeks or longer.

Incubation:

The symptoms usually begin 3 to 7 days after contact with this bacterium, generally less than 10 days.

Treatment:

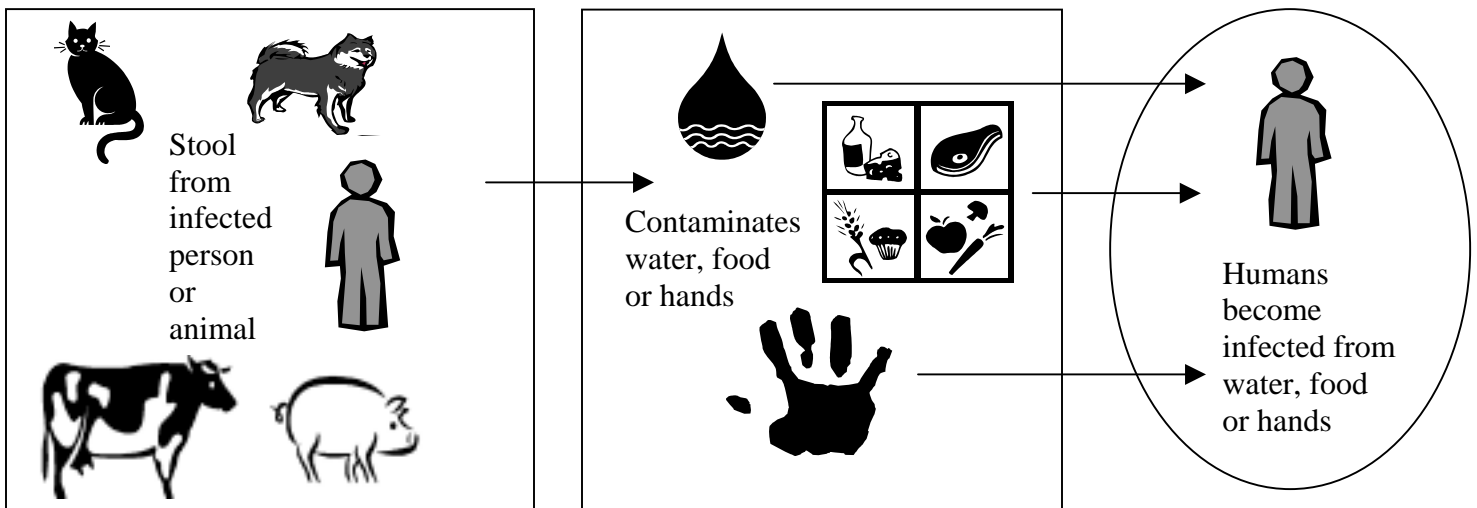
The illness usually resolves without treatment. Severe cases may require antibiotics. Antibiotics are definitely needed for septicemia (infection in the blood). It is very important to drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.

Communicable:

It is communicable as long as the bacteria are found in the feces (stool), especially while symptoms exist. If untreated, the bacteria may continue to be found in the feces for as long as 2 to 3 months, however person-to-person transmission is rare.

Transmitted by:

You catch this bacterium by eating or drinking contaminated water or food, particularly raw or under cooked pork. It is also spread by contact with infected people or animals.



OVER ►

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Complications:

Complications are rare. Some people develop complications about one month after initial symptoms. These complications include arthritis (pain in the joints of the knees, wrists, and ankles). The arthritis usually goes away in 1 to 6 months. A red, painful skin rash on the legs and torso called erythema nodosum may also occur. This complication is more common in women, and usually gets better on its own in about one month.

Other:

People who work as food handlers or in health care may **NOT** work until they are symptom free for 24-hours. A stool sample may be required. During a community outbreak people may be asked to stay home longer.

Prevention:

1. Ensure that family, friends and other close contacts of an infected individual are notified.
2. Avoid eating raw or undercooked meats. Never eat raw pork.
3. Eat only pasteurized milk, milk products, and juices.
4. Wash hands well with soap and water immediately after using the toilet and always before handling or eating food.
5. Make sure puppies and kittens with diarrhea are treated. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water after handling animals.
6. Dispose of animal feces in a sanitary manner.
7. Wash hands often when preparing raw meat and pork intestines.
8. Never prepare pork intestines when caring for children.
9. Use a separate cutting board for meat.
10. Clean cutting boards, countertops, and utensils with soap and hot water. Disinfect with a water/bleach solution after preparing raw meat. **Bleach solution:** one part bleach to nine parts water.

Sources:

1. Heymann D.L. (Ed.). (2004). *Control of Communicable Diseases Manual*, (18th ed.). Washington, DC: American Public Health Association
2. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. *Yersinia enterocolitica*. Retrieved Winter 2005, from http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/yersinia_g.htm

Revised winter 2005 – k.c

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