



Health and Wellness

YERSINIOSIS **(yer-SIN-ee-O-sis)**

What is yersiniosis?

Yersiniosis is a bacterial disease that generally affects the intestinal tract. It is a relatively uncommon disease and usually occurs as a single isolated event. Occasional outbreaks have been reported due to a common exposure.

How does a person get yersiniosis?

Infection is usually caused by eating contaminated food, especially raw or undercooked pork. Drinking contaminated unpasteurised milk or untreated water can also transmit the infection. Sometimes infection occurs after contact with infected animals. On rare occasions, it can be transmitted as a result of the bacteria passing from the stools or soiled fingers of one person to the mouth of another person. This may happen when basic hygiene and hand washing habits are inadequate.

What are the symptoms?

Infected people may experience mild or severe diarrhea, fever and abdominal cramps. Symptoms usually develop 4 to 7 days after exposure and may last 1 to 3 weeks or longer. In older children and adults, right-sided abdominal pain and fever may be the predominant symptoms, and may be confused with appendicitis. Some rare complications include skin rash, joint pains, or spread of bacteria to the bloodstream.

How can you prevent yersiniosis infection?

- Avoid eating raw or undercooked pork.
- Consume only pasteurized milk or milk products.
- Wash hands with soap and water before eating and preparing food, after contact with animals, and after handling raw meat.
- After handling raw chitterlings, clean hands and fingernails scrupulously with soap and water before touching infants or their toys, bottles, or pacifiers. Someone other than the foodhandler should care for children while chitterlings are being prepared. Prevent cross-contamination in the kitchen. Use separate cutting boards for meat and other foods. Carefully clean all cutting boards, counter-tops, and utensils with soap and hot water after preparing raw meat.
- Dispose of animal feces in a sanitary manner.

For more information please contact 1-800-958-6400 or the local Public Health Nursing Office.