

Yersiniosis (Yer-sini-osis)

What is Yersiniosis?

Yersiniosis is a disease that you can get by eating or using foods or water contaminated with Yersinia bacteria. This bacteria lives in the intestines of infected animals and people and is released with bowel movements.

How Yersiniosis is spread?

Yersiniosis is commonly spread through:

- Eating contaminated food, especially raw or undercooked pork products (i.e pork chitterlings)
- Drinking contaminated water or recreational water
- Consuming unpasteurized milk and milk products
- Through contact with infected people, puppies and kittens

Symptoms and Recovery

Symptoms usually appear within three to seven days after exposure to the bacteria, usually under 10 days.

Common symptoms in young children include fever, diarrhea and abdominal pain. In older children and adults symptoms also include appendicitis-like pain in the right lower quadrant of the abdomen. Symptoms commonly last one to three weeks but can last longer.

How can I reduce my risk of Yersiniosis infection?

Follow general safe food handling practices including:

- Wash your hands carefully after handling raw foods, after using the toilet, after contact with animals and before eating.
- Wash raw vegetables, including those that will be peeled, before eating.
- Wash knives and cutting boards after preparing uncooked foods.
- Thoroughly cook raw food from animal sources, such as beef, pork, and poultry.
- Store ready-to-eat food away from raw food.
- Avoid drinking water from shallow wells, rivers, lakes or streams. Only drink water that you know is uncontaminated.
- Consume only pasteurized milk and milk products.