

Yersiniosis

FACT SHEET

What is Yersiniosis?

Yersiniosis is a disease caused by either the bacteria *Yersinia enterocolitica* or *Yersinia pseudotuberculosis*. Infection is usually caused by eating contaminated food, especially raw or undercooked pork. Drinking contaminated unpasteurized 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.

Who Can Get Yersiniosis?

Anyone can get Yersiniosis; however, children are infected more often than adults.

What are the Symptoms?

Symptoms in young children include:

- Fever
- Stomach pain
- Diarrhea, which is often bloody

In older children and adults, symptoms include:

- Right-sided pain in the stomach area that may be confused with appendicitis
- Fever
- In some cases, people will get a skin rash or joint pain

What is the Treatment?

Most mild cases do not need any special treatment. In more serious cases, your doctor can prescribe antibiotics.

How Can You Prevent Yersiniosis?

- 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
- 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