



TRICHINELLOSIS (TRICHINOSIS) FACT SHEET

WHAT IS TRICHINELLOSIS?

Trichinellosis is caused by the larvae of a species of worm called *Trichinella*. Infection occurs commonly in certain wild animals such as bears, cougars, and boars or in domestic pigs.

HOW DO YOU GET TRICHINELLOSIS?

Humans can get Trichinosis by eating raw or undercooked meat from animals infected with the parasite.

SYMPTOMS

Abdominal symptoms can occur 1-2 days after infection. Other symptoms usually start 2-8 weeks after eating contaminated meat. The first symptoms of Trichinellosis may include: nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, fatigue, fever, and abdominal discomfort. Headaches, fevers, chills, cough, swelling of the face and eyes, aching joints and muscle pains, itchy skin, diarrhea, or constipation may follow the first symptoms. Most symptoms subside within a few months.

TREATMENT

Prescription drugs are available to treat both *Trichinella* infection and the symptoms that occur as a result of infection. Discuss treatment options with your doctor.

PREVENTION

- Cook meat to safe temperatures. A food thermometer should be used to measure the internal temperature of cooked meat.
- Avoid cross-contamination of food with raw meat juices.
- Wash kitchen work surfaces and utensils with soap and water immediately after they have been in contact with raw meat.
- Wash hands with soap and water after using the restroom, after changing diapers, before eating or preparing food, and after contact with animals or their feces.

DGHD EFFORTS

The Delaware General Health District (DGHD) routinely inspects restaurants, grocery stores, and other places where food is sold. In addition, we provide training to food service workers and the public regarding proper food handling practices. Reports of suspected and confirmed cases of disease are made to the DGHD. The DGHD investigates potential sources of illness, conducts surveillance for the spread of disease, and engages in community outreach and education.