

# Yersiniosis

## Fact Sheet

### What is Yersiniosis?

Yersiniosis is an infectious disease caused by a bacterium of the genus *Yersinia*. It causes watery diarrhea (often bloody), fever, vomiting, headache and severe abdominal pain which mimics appendicitis. Symptoms usually appear 3-7 days after exposure and can last 2-3 weeks. It occurs most often in infants and young children.

### How is yersiniosis spread?

It can occur after eating or drinking something contaminated with the bacteria. The most common source of infection is raw or undercooked pork products. Drinking unpasteurized milk or contaminated water can also cause infection. It is possible to pass the infection from one person to another.

### How is it treated?

Yersiniosis is treated with specific antibiotics.

### How is it prevented?

- Wash hands after using the washroom, changing diapers, contact with pets and livestock, and before handling food products.
- Avoid eating raw or undercooked pork.
- Consume only pasteurized milk or milk products.
- Clean and sanitize utensils and counter tops after contact with raw meats.
- Drink water from a safe source.
- If ill, avoid preparing or handling food products.

### Other Questions?

Talk to your health care provider or call our Communicable Disease Program at 613-966-5500 x349. Toll Free 1-800-267-2803 | TTY Dial 711 (1-800-267-6511) | [www.hpepublichealth.ca](http://www.hpepublichealth.ca)

### References

- Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors, Yersiniosis, August 2000.
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, Yersiniosis, April 2008.

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