

## Essential Health Bulletin On Parasites: The Hidden Problem: Are they in you?

Do you suffer from unexplained stomach-aches, persistent diarrhea, or other mysterious skin conditions? The parasite is organisms that lives off of other organisms, such as animals or humans. Parasites living throughout our body live on the food we eat and leave their waste behind them. They feed off our metabolic process, drain our inner resources, and leave us fatigued and often leave us debilitated.

Parasites infect over 2 billion people worldwide. Persistent skin rash, digestive difficulties, constipation or other complaints are linked to parasites; in some cases they kill. In 1993, an outbreak of cryptosporidium in the water supply in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and sickened over 400,000 people with watery diarrhea and other digestive symptoms. Over 100 people died from this incident of parasites alone.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta estimates that 76 million people pick up parasites from food every year in the US, and by the year 2025 scientists estimate that half of the world's population will be infested with some type of parasitic infection.

Due to global warming, which makes environment more parasite friendly, and increased global travel, parasites are now more common in North America than ever before. Other factors spreading parasites include pollution, increased crowding of children together in day-care centers, infected military personnel returning from infested areas, household pets, the overuse of antibiotics and other drugs, infected food and water, exposure to multiple romantic partners and infected community swimming pools are all factors in spreading of parasites.

Researchers at Ohio State University estimate 400 million people worldwide are infected by pinworm parasites. It's one of a most common type of parasitic worms found in the digestive system of North Americans. Pinworms are a class of worms called nematodes, or roundworms; they dwell in the upper portions of our large intestines and appendix. They are easily transmitted through direct contact with pinworm eggs found on contaminated furniture, bedclothes or doorknobs, this infection often contaminates others.

You may have parasites and not know it says Ann Louise Gittleman, PhD, CNS, Author of *Guess What Came to Dinner*, Avery, 1993, these masked marauders mimic other diseases, and are often misdiagnosed. Without proper detection or treatment, parasites can linger in the body wreaking havoc for up to 30 years."

Other parasites cause noticeable symptoms, including fever and abdominal pain. Some parasites are able to block your absorption of minerals and other nutrients, which can lead to malnutrition, weight loss, and other ailments. So because doctors are not trained to recognize parasite problems, and because so many of their symptoms can mimic infection from bacteria or virus, parasitic infestations are often neglected and patients are treated for the wrong disorder.

To complicate matters, testing for parasites is often thought useless. Yet over 1,000 parasites can inhabit the human body; yet diagnosticians only devised tests for 40 parasites. Though most parasites live in the nutrient-dense small intestines, they can migrate throughout the body. Tests for parasites may depend on examinations of several stool samples. The irregular life cycles of those pests mean that on any given day, no sign of them may show up in fees. A thorough examination may require multiple tests over multiple time periods.

You can contract parasites in numerous ways. Contaminated water is probably the most common. Parasites can lurk in tap water, contaminated bottled water, hot tubs, rivers and streams, saunas and swimming pools. Unfortunately, chlorine does not kill most forms of parasites; many are able to escape common filtering systems. To avoid parasites in your food, be cautious when consuming raw, undercooked or cured meats, and any unwashed, or raw fruits and vegetables.

Researchers at Center for Advancement of Health, say our undercooked meat is our main risk factor for parasite infection by an invader called toxoplasma. Infection by this protozoan is called toxoplasmosis, and can lead to brain damage, birth defects and brain inflammation in a mother and her fetus. Most people carrying this parasite are unaware of it. Often it infests lymph nodes but can spread to the eyes and brain. About 35 million people in the US are chronically infected with toxoplasma. (Science, 1/17/03). Cat litter can harbor this nasty parasite.

Closer contact with animals increases the risk of parasite infections, especially for small children. Family pets are notorious harbingers of parasites and should be de-wormed regularly. You can pet your dogs, but follow (stringent hygiene practices) when cleaning up after them. A study at Milwaukee Health Department found the parasites 'cryptosporidium and giardia' in about one in five samples of dog stools, (New Scientist, 5/98).

Stools were found to contain adult parasite, eggs, larvae and their highly resistant cysts. Ninety percent of the dogs testing positive for cryptosporidium were puppies 30 weeks or younger, while for giardia, puppies were accounted three out of four of the affected animals. Though they were infected, the dogs appeared healthy and none displayed any signs of illness.

Farm animals, houseflies and mosquitoes can also carry and pass parasites onto humans. Always wash your hands after handling animals. Parasites are good at survival. Some fool the body into thinking they are a normal part of our tissues or organs. Other parasites secrete a fat that inhibits our immune response. Parasites also give off metabolic wastes of their own, as damaging to our immune system. One fungal offender, *Candida albicans*, secretes an acid that can damage the mucosal lining of the digestive tract, allowing the organism to puncture the intestinal wall and enter the bloodstream.

LET US BANISH PARASITES: When toxins or waste material build up in the colon, we increase our risk of parasites. So the first step in lowering our risk is to do a speedy elimination of these wastes. Daily helpings of fiber can stimulate the colon's muscular contractions, (known as peristalsis) to remove contamination on which parasites thrive. Fiber sweeps our intestines clean of toxins, and even pulls parasites from the walls of the digestive tract. Flax consists of both water-soluble and insoluble fiber, and is perhaps the most ideal fiber supplement. It provides plenty of roughage for bulk, and its soluble fiber feeds the beneficial bacteria that help maintain a healthy intestinal environment; it helps balance levels of pathogens.

If you are concerned about parasites, you can use an internal cleansing program designed to promote a healthy balance of intestinal microbes. A quality product will provide a broad spectrum of ingredients including herbs and nutraceuticals, so that the greatest number of organisms are addressed.

Colon cleanses include herbs such as rosemary, thyme, marshmallow, orange peel. Grapefruit seed extract, black walnut, wormwood, and garlic, along with supportive nutraceuticals such as undecylenic acid and bismuth citrate. Herbs such as goldenseal, barberry and Oregon grape, containing berberine, a natural medicinal compound, can help fight parasites that cause diarrhea.

Maintenance or during cleansing process: Use Enzyme supplements to support a parasite management program, and if taken with food can assist the body's own digestive processes, helping to breakdown foods, that if left partially undigested, can provide food for parasites in your digestive system. When stomach acid is low, the supplement regime should include (hydrochloric acid) or HCl). In which (HCl) in the stomach serves to sterilize the food

or liquids consumed. Without sufficient (HCl) acid, organisms can enter and cause problems.

Betaine, (HCl) from beets is best taken along with other digestive aides, and enzymes. Look for products containing a variety of digestive enzymes, including protease for protein, lipase for fats and amylase for starches and sugars. You will also benefit from L-glutamine, N-acetyl D-glucosamine (NAG) and gamma oryzanol, which support a healthy intestinal lining. Butyric acid, a common byproduct of fiber fermentation by probiotics in the large intestine, is also available in supplement form and can be of particular benefit to individuals concerned about intestinal well-being. By Dr. Gittleman: "Lifestyle changes and natural substances (both herbal & digestive can eliminate parasites. By daily using digestive enzymes, thoroughly washed produce, regular colon-cleansing and (doing periodic Colonics) can help prevent parasites from taking residence in us.

This following chart helps you take the Parasite Self Testing to determine if you need the parasite cleanse.

Here is your parasite Quiz:

Do you experience unexplained muscle aches & pains? ---Yes \_\_\_ Or NO\_\_\_ (Yes =1) - (NO) = 0 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you experience normal bowel movements, yet get bouts of intermittent diarrhea? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ NO\_\_\_ (Yes = 1) - (NO) = 0 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have unexplained weight loss, and or fever? \_\_\_ Yes\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_ (Yes = 1) - (NO) = 0 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a large or distended belly? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ (Yes = 1) - (NO) = 0 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you grind your teeth while you sleep? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ (Yes = 1) - (NO) = 0 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have dark circles under eyes / or acne? \_\_\_ Yes\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ (Yes = 1) - (NO) = 0 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you suffer from insomnia, or disturbed sleep? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ (Yes = 1) - (NO) = 0 \_\_\_\_\_

Have you traveled outside of the United States? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ NO\_\_\_ (Yes = 1) - (NO) = 0 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you eat unpeeled raw fruit, or veggies? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ ((Yes = 1) - (NO) = 0 \_\_\_\_\_

Do pets sleep with you, or do you eat with unwashed hands after handling pets? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ (Yes = 1) - (NO) = 0 \_\_\_\_\_

Score of 3 or more indicates you may have parasites! \_\_\_\_\_ Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_

This article or results of a self test is not intended to be substitutes for professional medical care. If suspect parasites, see an MD.