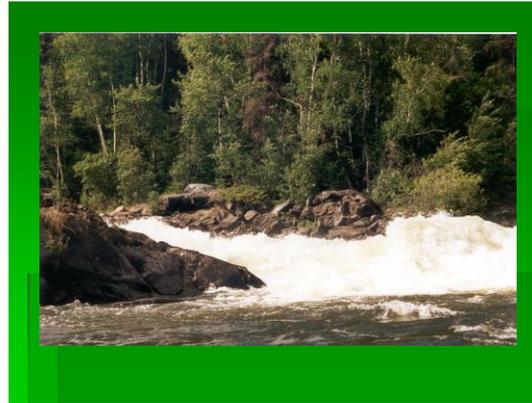


Can My Pet Be Tested?

It is very difficult to test your pet for this tapeworm. For more information, contact your veterinarian.



What Is Echinococcosis?

Northern Inter Tribal Health Authority

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Source: CDC, Control of Communicable Diseases Manual

For more information please contact the NITHA office:

Medical Health Officer
Or
Environmental Health Advisor



What Is Echinococcosis?

Echinococcosis is an infection in humans caused by a microscopic tapeworm. This tapeworm can infect foxes, coyotes, dogs and cats. Infected animals pass the tapeworm eggs in their stools.



How Would It Affect Me?

Once the tapeworm eggs are accidentally swallowed, the eggs hatch releasing the larvae, which migrate to organs in your body, primarily the liver, where they form cysts. Because the cysts are slow-growing you may not have any symptoms for many years. You may experience pain or discomfort in the upper abdominal region, weakness and weight loss. Symptoms may mimic those of liver cancer or cirrhosis of the liver.

How Would I Become Infected?

Humans can be infected by accidentally swallowing the tapeworm eggs, which are too tiny to see. Petting or



handling infected pets, like dogs or cats, can infect humans. Pets may shed the tapeworm eggs in their stool, and their fur may be contaminated. Also, some dogs “scent roll” in foreign material (such as wild animal feces) and may become contaminated this way. Grass, herbs, greens or berries can become contaminated with the stool from infected animals.

Can I Be Tested?

A blood sample can be tested for the presence of the parasite or antibodies. Contact your health care provider if you think you may have been exposed.

How Can I Prevent Echinococcosis?

The following precautions will help you and your family avoid infection:

- After handling pets, always wash your hands, or your children’s hands, with soap and warm water.



- Wash or cook fruits, vegetables or wild-picked foods before eating.



- Prevent pets from contact or eating uncooked meat of wild animals that may be infected.
- Incinerate or bury discarded carcasses of fox, coyotes, or other wild canines.
- Fence in gardens to keep out wild animals.
- Wear gloves to handle fox, coyote or other wild canines.