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Parasites: The Missing Diagnosis?

By Cori Young

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by: **Cori Young**

Parasites, commonly thought of as only affecting those in developing countries, actually affect 1 in 6 people in North America and are the most common disease condition in the world. For many chronic conditions this can be the missing diagnosis. For example, amebiasis can be misdiagnosed as Chron's disease, and roundworm can be mistaken for peptic ulcers. IBS, food allergies, and chronic fatigue syndrome have all been found to have parasitic causes.

WHAT IT IS

A parasite is an organism which lives off of a host body, such as humans plants and animals,feeding on the nutrients, cells and organs of the host. Some reproduce by producing thousands of eggs, or simply replicating by cell division, within the host. Living in the body, they often move around and graze, eating cells and draining nutrients from the host's tissues, while secreting fecal wastes.

CAUSES

Transmitted in a variety of ways,it is likely that everyone is host to some type of parasite. Transmission can occur through ingestion of cysts contained in contaminated food & water, person-to-person contact, cockroaches, houseflies, etc. as in the case of amebiasis, giardiasis, Some are spread by insect bites, (Chagas' disease, malaria). Most microbial infections come from our food and water sources but can also be transmitted by human or animal contact. Simply petting and grooming our pets can cause infection as parasites' eggs pass from their fur to our hands, nose and mouth. Some

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parasites (e.g. pinworms) can even be transmitted through the air and are in the dust we breath. It's likely, therefore, that those who live in the same household will all have the same parasitic infections, whether they are currently symptomatic or not.

SYMPTOMS

Wide-ranging symptoms can be chronic or acute and include:

NAUSEA

VOMITTING

DIARRHEA

BLOOD OR MUCUS IN STOOL

ITCHY SKIN

SKIN RASHES

ABDOMINAL PAIN

FLATULENCE

SULFUROUS BURPING

DECREASED APPETITE

WEIGHT LOSS

INTENSE ITCHING AROUND ANUS AND /OR NOSE

SLEEP DISTURBANCES

ABNORMAL VAGINAL DISCHARGE

LIVER/SPLEEN ENLARGEMENT

DIAGNOSIS

Unless a lab is experienced in looking for microbial infections it is highly likely that diagnostic tests will miss them because they take so many different forms within their many stages of development. To locate a clinic near you contact the Great Smokies Diagnostic Laboratories at:

<http://www.gsdl.com>

TREATMENT

Conventional treatment involves the use of parasiticides which are generally very toxic, even in the small doses needed, and thus, must be used carefully. These drugs are also generally specific for only one particular parasitic organism at certain stages of parasitic development. Because of the cunning survival strategies of parasites, and the fact that most are motile, they can quickly migrate from the area of the body that is being treated. Herbal treatments are generally more successful at treating the differing stages of parasitic infection and for dealing with parasites for which there are no conventional treatments available.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Practice good hygiene.

Keep nails short, especially children's.

Wash hands often, especially after using toilet.

Launder bedding often in hot water.

Avoid suspect water sources.

Freeze fish for 24 hrs before eating to kill tapeworms.

BENEFICIAL HERBS

AGRIMONY

ARTEMISIA (WORMWOOD)

BARBERRY

BETEL NUT

BLACK WALNUT

BROMELAIN

CLOVES

ECHINACEA

GARLIC

IPECAC

PAU D' ARCO

PRICKLY ASH

WOLFBERRY

Coconut Oil contains antifungal properties and can be used topically or taken internally.

Cori Young is an herbalist living in the Pacific Northwest.
For more information on healing with herbs, visit her website,
Herbal Remedies Info (

<http://www.herbalremediesinfo.com>

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Are Parasites Killing Your Pets?

By Bruce Channers

Of course we all want to take care of our beloved pets but is it possible that parasites are endangering their lives? Although dogs and cats are generally considered to be rather disease free, they are both susceptible to parasites such as hook worms. Otherwise known as *Dipylidium Caninum*, the "hook worm" is a particularly nasty parasite that can and will shorten the life of your pet unless properly treated.

Parasites like the hook worm actually have teeth that they use to attach to the small intestine of your dog or cat (actually, these parasites are also a danger to humans too!). Now these are rather simple parasites with three basic body parts: the head, neck, and tail. Every hook worm has only one head and neck, but they may have several tail segments.

The tail segment is very important to parasites like the hook worm because this is how they breed. Every tail section has the reproductive organs for the hook worm. Sections of tail break off all the time and are passed with other solid waste (in the animal's feces). Fleas, who lay their eggs in feces, eat the tail segments and are thus infected with hook worm.

The parasites are passed on to the animal when the flea bites it. It is also possible for animals to become infested with these parasites by eating the fleas themselves. Therefore, the best prevention for hook worms is to rid your home and yard of fleas. Then, make sure the animal is free of the parasites by taking it to your veterinarian. If infected, the animal will be orally given a mild poison that will cleanse its system of the hook worms.

Hook worms may not seem like very dangerous parasites but their effect upon animals is cumulative.

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After prolonged periods of infestation, animals will appear emaciated as they will have been deprived of essential vitamins, minerals, and nutrients by the parasites clinging to their intestinal walls. In time, the immune system will weaken and the animal will become prone to disease. If left untreated, hook worms are indeed parasites that can and will kill your pets.

It is usually possible to determine if your animal has hook worms by inspecting its stool for the parasites. Plus, if the stool is often too wet or runny, it is likely your pet has hook worms. Pets suspected of having the parasites need to be taken to the vet immediately as the risk of spreading hook worms to humans is very real. After the animal has been rid of the worms, be sure to destroy any flea populations in the area or the risk of re-infection is very high.

Parasites Info is an information site that contains links, a directory and other Parasites Information. It can be found at:

<http://www.parasitesinfo.com>

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