

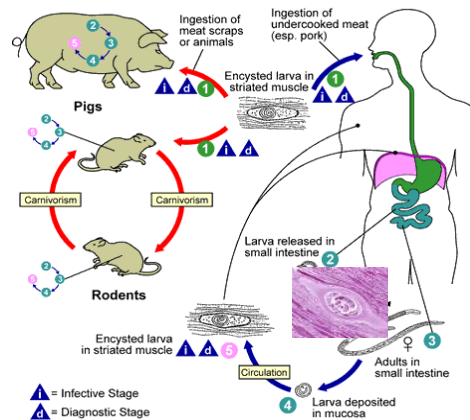


Investigate (food- and waterborne) outbreaks

EXERCISES

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At the end of the course, the student should be able to:

- Start and conduct an outbreak investigation

Exercise 1

The reason to ask for the complete list of food consumed is because:

- a. Foodborne illnesses are caused by meat products only, so we need to get a list of them
- b. Drinks and ice are never a suspected agent for foodborne illness
- c. At the initial information gathering stage, we cannot immediately say what is or is not a food causing an illness, so we need as complete a list as possible of all foods consumed
- d. Whatever was the most consumed food, by weight, is what caused the illness

Exercise 2

The reason to ask for the time and date consumed and then also the onset of symptoms time is:

- a. To establish an incubation period
- b. To establish what was done by the ill person in the interim
- c. To establish if the food was out of date
- d. To verify if a clerk was in the health department office

Exercise 3

The reason to ask for a physician's diagnosis is:

- a. A physician's diagnosis may help narrow the possible causative agents
- b. As a part of the physician's diagnosis, stool or other clinical specimens may have been taken that could provide a potential cause of illness
- c. The health department can contact this physician as well as other local health care providers for information on similar symptoms and diagnoses
- d. All of the above

Exercise 4

The reason to ask for the symptoms is:

- a. In conjunction with the incubation time, this gives an indication of the type of illness agent that might be involved
- b. If vomiting is a symptom, we can exclude meat products from consideration as a cause of illness
- c. If vomiting is a symptom, we can exclude poisonous mushrooms as a cause of illness
- d. To exclude vegetables as a cause of illness

Exercise 5

You have a report that a person

- ✓ ate lunch at 12 noon yesterday at a local fast food restaurant,
- ✓ the meal consisted of a hamburger with tomato, lettuce, onion, and mustard; fries, large ice tea, and apple pie
- ✓ at 5:30 pm yesterday, the person was ill with severe diarrhea, abdominal cramps, fever, and nausea but no vomiting. He has been too sick to eat anything since, so yesterday's noon meal was the last thing consumed

He has seen a news report about a recall of hamburger meat due to contamination with E. coli O157H:7. So he has called you to report that he believes he has E. coli O157:H7 from the hamburger he ate yesterday. Knowing that the incubation period for E.coliO157:H7 is at least 48h, is this possible? Why or why not?

This same person is the only report of an illness associated with this local fast food restaurant on this day. Is this considered a foodborne disease outbreak? Why or why not?