

How can you prevent Hydatid disease?

- worm your dog
- wash your hands after touching a dog, clearing up dog poo or touching anything that might have been in contact with dog poo
- avoid feeding raw offal to your dog
- do not allow your dog to stray in areas where it could scavenge on sheep carcasses
- always wash your hands after handling dogs
- ensure livestock carcasses are removed and disposed of appropriately, without delay
- wash raw fruit and vegetables before eating them.

Further information and help

If you would like further information contact:

Health Protection Team
37 South Beach
Stornoway
Isles of Lewis, HS1 2BB
Tel: 01851 708033

We are listening - how did we do?

We welcome your feedback, as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:



- speak to a member of staff
- visit our website: www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/feedback or share your story at: www.careopinion.org.uk or tel. 0800 1223135
- tel. 01851 704704 (ext 2236) Monday-Friday between 10am-4pm.

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Written by:

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Disclaimer

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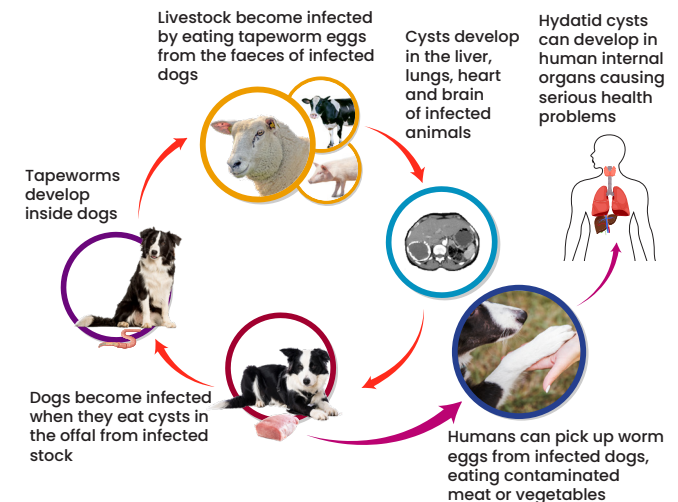


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HYDATID DISEASE

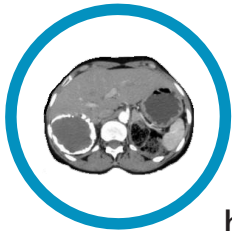
Also called Echinococcosis, hydatidosis or hydatid cysts.

Hydatid Life cycle



Hydatid cyst photo by
<https://doi.org/10.3390/diagnostics13061127>/CC BY 4.0

What is Hydatid disease?



Hydatic disease or cystic echinococcosis is a parasitic infection caused by a tapeworm. It can cause cysts to grow in the liver and other organs of humans. It is very rare in Scotland.

Once the tapeworms are in a dog, they can become adults and lay eggs which are passed out in dog poo, contaminating grass, the dog's hair, mouth and the environment.

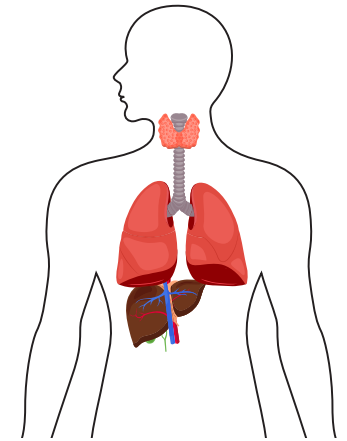


It can also be transmitted when you eat fruit and vegetables grown in land contaminated with dog poo.

Hydatid disease does not spread from person to person. A person must ingest the parasite to get the infection.

What are the symptoms in humans?

Hydatic cysts start out very small and most people only get symptoms years after picking them up. Symptoms are dependent upon the location in the body. In the liver they cause swelling and general symptoms such as abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting. In the lungs, the cysts can cause a chronic cough, shortness of breath or chest pain.



What causes Hydatid?

Tapeworms can live in sheep, dogs and other farm animals.



How do humans get Hydatid disease?

Humans can accidentally swallow the eggs:

- when they eat or drink something infected with the parasite
- by touching or kissing an infected dog
- not washing your hands properly after handling dog poo.



Dogs can pick up the tapeworm if they eat raw meat from an animal that had the condition.