

2019 Outbreak of Trichinellosis Associated with Bear Meat

In August 2019, a clinician contacted the LPHA after diagnosing trichinellosis based on a patient's clinical presentation and recent exposure to bear meat.

Trichinellosis is contracted by eating raw or undercooked meat of animals infected with larvae of roundworms of the genus *Trichinella*. While the clinical manifestation varies, cases often experience fever and myalgia and have periorbital edema and eosinophilia. In the U.S. today, trichinellosis remains relatively uncommon.

Review of the medical record revealed that the patient had become sick along with three others who attended a gathering where they consumed burgers of ground bear meat. The four all became ill within three days of consuming the bear meat, and three were hospitalized for their illnesses. Four samples of leftover bear meat were tested, and *Trichinella murrelli* larvae were identified in all four, ranging from 2–19 larvae per gram.

Thanks to prompt reporting by an astute clinician, the leftover bear meat was discarded, and others were spared the illness.

SOURCE: Oregon Health Division CD Summary, June 2021, Volume 70, Number 5