Yersiniosis (Yersinia infection)

**What is Yersiniosis?**
Yersiniosis is an infection of the intestines of people and animals. It is caused by a bacteria (germ) called *Yersinia enterocolitica*. These germs are found in the bowel movement (stool) of infected people and animals (especially pigs) and in contaminated water and foods.

**What are the symptoms?**
Symptoms usually begin 1 to 4 days after becoming infected and may last 4 to 7 days, and may include:

In Children:
- Diarrhea (Sometimes bloody)
- Fever
- Abdominal pain

In Adults:
- Right-sided abdominal pain (mimicking appendicitis)
- Fever

**How is it spread?**
- Eating raw or undercooked pork products.
- Handling raw pork intestines (chitterlings).
- Consuming raw milk or milk products.
- Swallowing untreated water (e.g. lakes, rivers, springs, streams, ponds).
- Having contact with an infected animal.
- Not washing hands after using the bathroom or cleaning up animal stool.

**Who gets Yersiniosis?**
Anyone can get Yersiniosis. Those who travel internationally are more likely to develop infection. Infants, young children, the elderly, and those immunocompromised are at greater risk to develop serious complications.

**What should I do if I have symptoms?**
- Contact your healthcare provider.

**How is Yersiniosis diagnosed?**
- By testing a stool sample.

**How is Yersiniosis treated?**
- Most people who have healthy immune systems will recover without treatment.

**How can I prevent the spread of Yersiniosis?**
- Do not eat raw or undercooked pork products.
- Cook pork to an internal temperature of 160 F.
- Consume only pasteurized milk and milk products.
- After handling chitterlings, wash hands well before touching infants, their bottles and pacifiers.
- Prevent cross contamination in the kitchen:
  - Use separate cutting boards for meats and other foods.
  - Clean and sanitize cutting boards, counter tops, and utensils.
- Do not prepare food for others.
- Do not swallow untreated water.
- Do not swim while you have diarrhea, or for 24 hours after symptoms have resolved.
- Wash your hands with warm, soapy water for 20 seconds:
  - After handling raw meat, especially pork.
  - After using the bathroom or changing diapers.
  - After touching animals or their stool.
  - Before eating or preparing food.
- Assist young children with hand washing.
- Do not send your child to daycare or preschool if he or she has diarrhea.
- Do not go to work if you are a healthcare worker, food handler or a daycare worker.

**For further information visit:**
- [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov)
- For safe travelling tips:

**Report Yersiniosis cases to Saint Louis County Department of Public Health by calling:** 314-615-1630