

Helminthic Infections – a Source of Concern for Travellers

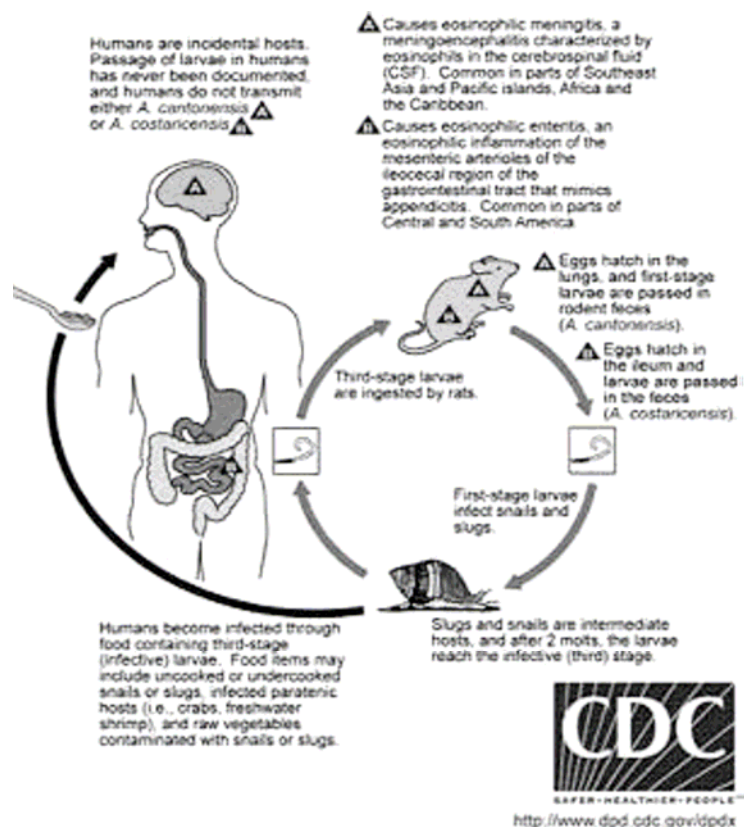
Helminthic infections can cause eosinophilic meningitis (EM).

Neuroangiostrongyliasis, a rodent zoonosis caused by the rat lungworm, is endemic throughout Southeast Asia and the United States and reported in the Indo-Pacific Basin and many Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico port cities following the worldwide importation of its causative parasite, *Angiostrongylus cantonensis*, in stowaway rats on container ships. Giant African land snails, *Achatina fulica*, and indigenous snail and slug species serve as intermediate hosts of *A. cantonensis*, which is now capable of completing its complex life cycle almost worldwide.

Baylisascariasis, a raccoon zoonosis, has distribution range from the northern US to the southeast and west coast since the 1980s and has now appeared in Japan.

Gnathostomiasis, a zoonosis of wild carnivores, has appeared as a cause of EM among travelers returning to the United Kingdom. It is an endemic cause of EM throughout Asia and Latin America. Neurocysticercosis is a central nervous system infection with the larval or cystic (cysticercus) stage of the pork tapeworm, and a leading cause of late-onset epilepsy in adults.

Taenia solium, is now the most common parasitic disease of the CNS worldwide. Most parasitic diseases causing EM are no longer confined to tropical countries; many are now endemic throughout the developed world.



▲ = Infective Stage
 ▲ = Diagnostic Stage



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