

FACT SHEET

Yersinia

Common clinical features

Watery diarrhoea, abdominal pain and fever. Abdominal pain is often severe and may mimic appendicitis particularly in children. An immune reaction may occur after infection with *Yersinia* leading to arthritis particularly in adolescents and adults. Septicaemia occasionally occurs in the immuno compromised.

Incubation period

3-7 days.

Where is it found?

Gastrointestinal tracts of many species of wild and domestic animals and birds.

How is it acquired by affected individuals?

From eating contaminated food and drinking contaminated water. It is particularly associated with pork. Direct contact with infected animals and person to person spread are also possible routes of transmission.

How does the laboratory confirm the diagnosis?

The bacteria are cultured from faeces samples on selective media. Results will usually be available after 2 to 3 days. Tests will be set up only if symptoms strongly suggest infection with *Yersinia*.

How is it treated?

Symptomatic treatment and rehydration. Antibiotics may be required for more severe disease.