

Fast Facts

Toxoplasmosis

- Results from an infection with the parasite *Toxoplasma gondii*, which is one of the most common parasites in the world
 - Can infect most animals and birds
- Only excreted in cat feces, making domestic and wild cats the primary host
- Humans can become infected if they come into contact with cat feces, such as when gardening outside or cleaning a litter box
- Also likely to be infected if you consume undercooked meats, especially lamb, venison, and pork, eat unpasteurized dairy products or drink contaminated water
- Eating unwashed fruits and vegetables and not washing knives, cutting boards, and other utensils are other ways to contract infection
- Mothers can pass it to their unborn children

<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
<p><i>Healthy Individuals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No symptoms (most likely) <p><i>Otherwise:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Body aches -Swollen lymph nodes -Headache -Fever -Fatigue <p><i>People with weakened immune system:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Confusion -Poor coordination -Seizures -Blurred vision -Lung problems <p><i>Fetus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Stillbirth or miscarriage -Seizures -Enlarged spleen/liver -Jaundice (yellowing of their skin and eyes) -Severe eye infections 	<p><i>Healthy (no symptoms):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No treatment <p><i>Healthy (symptoms):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Medication (pyrimethamine and sulfadiazine) -Add folinic acid for HIV/AIDS, pregnant women (after the 16th week), and infants <p><i>Pregnant women before the 16th week:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Spiramycin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Not eating raw or undercooked meats, especially lamb, pork, and beef -Avoid raw cured meats -Wash all fruits, vegetables, and utensils thoroughly -Don't consume unpasteurized dairy products -Wear gloves when working out in the garden or handling soil (wash your hands afterward) -Keep children's sandboxes covered so that cats won't use them as a litter box <p>If you have cats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Don't let them outside -Feed them dry and/or canned cat food -Don't give them raw meat -If pregnant or have a compromised immune system, have someone else clean your cats' litter box (if this isn't possible, wear gloves and a face mask when changing the litter) -Avoid stray cats or kittens

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