

# HYDATID DISEASE: KNOW YOUR PARASITES

Echinococcus tapeworm  
(Microscopic Image)



## WHAT IS HYDATID DISEASE?

Hydatid disease is an infection caused by the parasite *Echinococcus granulosus*, a type of tapeworm.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Hydatid disease can affect both people and animals and animals can be a source of infection for people
- Every year in New South Wales, at least 1 person for every 100,000 people living in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities become sick with with hydatid disease

## WHICH ANIMALS CAN BE INFECTED?



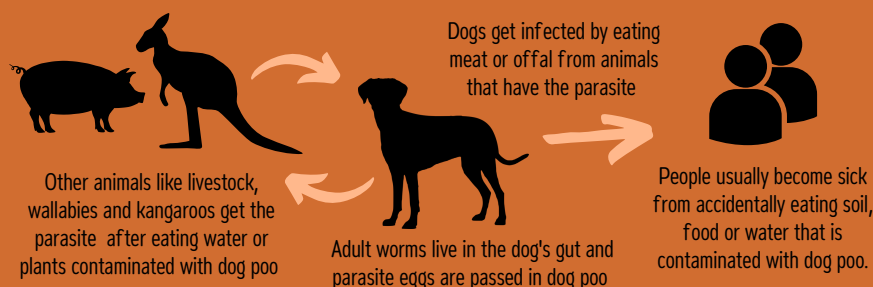
- Dogs & dingos
- Livestock animals, like sheep, cattle, goats, pigs, horses & camels
- Kangaroos & wallabies

## WHERE IS IT FOUND?

The parasite is most common in areas where:

- There large numbers of dogs, livestock animals and people together in the same place (for example farms)
- Areas where there is a lot of humidity

## HOW DO PEOPLE GET INFECTED?



## TREATMENT

If you have symptoms of hydatid disease talk to your doctor about treatment options.



## WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

People with hydatid disease can have different symptoms including:



- General signs, like anorexia, weight loss, and weakness.
- Stomach pain, nausea, and vomiting
- Coughing, chest pain, and difficulty breathing



Dingos and dogs usually show no signs of infection but they can still spread the parasite to people & other animals.



Other animals can show a number of different symptoms, but often show a poor body condition, low energy or trouble breathing.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFE?

- Prevent dogs from eating raw meat or offal from dead animals
- Talk to your vet about giving your dog regular parasite treatment
- Wash fruit & vegetables before eating
- Wash hands with soap & water after touching dogs and before eating
- Teach children the importance of washing hands to prevent infection