

Yersiniosis

Yersiniosis Quick Fact: *Y. Enterocolitica* is the most common species of Yersinia in Georgia.

OVERVIEW

Yersiniosis is a zoonotic bacterial infection that generally affects the intestinal tract and occasionally the bloodstream. On average, 40 cases occur in Georgia each year. Most cases occur during the winter holiday season and are often infants and young children.

Mode of Transmission: *Yersinia* spp. is usually transmitted via consumption of undercooked or raw pork products.

- Other common vehicles include raw milk, contaminated water, and contact with infected animals.
- Poor hand washing and environmental cleaning after handling raw pork, particularly chitterlings, often result in the infection of infants and small children.
- Fecal-oral transmission from person to person **may also occur**.

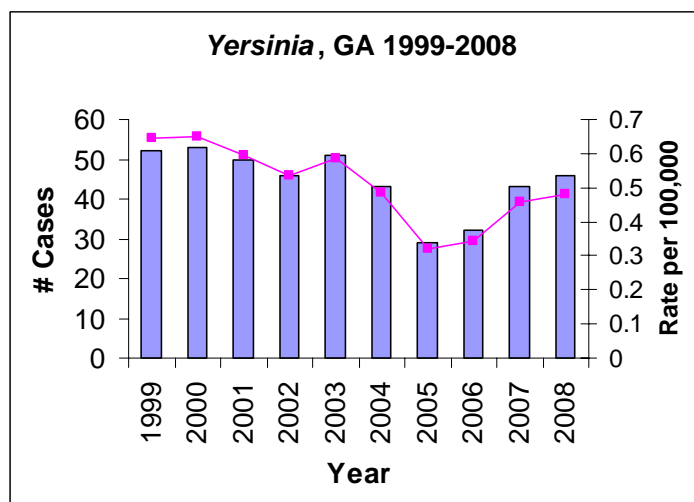
SURVEILLANCE

- All Georgia physicians, laboratories and other health care providers are required by law to report both lab-confirmed and clinical diagnoses of cases of Yersiniosis.
- Cultures should be sent to the Georgia Public Health Laboratory for confirmation and serotype determination.
- Active Surveillance for Yersiniosis conducted through FoodNet. For more information, please visit:
 - <http://health.state.ga.us/eip/>
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/foodnet/>

INCIDENCE

In 2008, 46 cases of *Yersinia* were reported, for a rate of 0.47/100,000 (Figure 1). The incidence of *Yersinia* in Georgia has remained stable over time with the exception of a 2005 decrease. This decrease occurred the same year as the launch of the Safer Chitterling Preparation Educational Campaign.

Figure 1. Yersiniosis Cases and Rate



DEMOGRAPHICS

- In 2008, of the reported cases with known race and ethnicity, 54% of cases were Black, 29% of cases were White, and 19% of cases were Hispanic (Figure 2).
- Consistent with the described epidemiology of *Yersinia* infections, in Georgia, higher rates of disease occur in infants and young children, followed by elderly individuals (Figure 3).

Figure 2

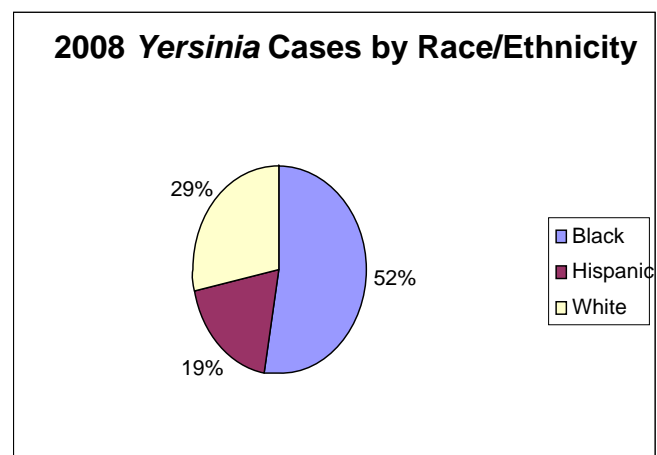
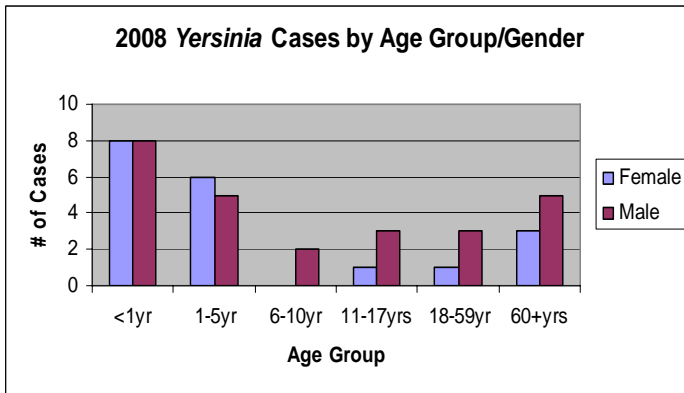


Figure 3



IMPACT OF YERSINIOSIS

Hospitalizations & Deaths

Of the 46 reported cases of Yersiniosis in 2008, 44% individuals were hospitalized, while an additional 30% of individuals were seen in the Emergency Room; 1 Yersiniosis case died.

PREVENTION & RESEARCH

Food Preparation Tips

1. Always treat raw poultry, beef and pork as if they are contaminated and handle accordingly:
 - Wrap fresh meats in plastic bags at the market to prevent blood from dripping on other foods.
 - Refrigerate foods promptly; minimize holding time at room temperature.
 - Cutting boards and counters used for meat preparation should be washed immediately after use to prevent cross contamination with other foods.
 - Avoid eating raw or undercooked meats.
 - Ensure that the correct internal cooking temperature is reached, particularly when using a microwave.

2. Avoid consuming raw (unpasteurized) milk or products made with it (like cheese).

For more information, visit: www.foodsafety.gov

Hand Washing

Encourage careful hand washing before and after food preparation and contact with animals.

Safer Chitterling Preparation Campaign

In 2008, 6 cases (13%) reported contact with or consumption of raw pork or chitterlings. Of those 6 cases, 3 of them were infants.

- The Georgia Division of Public Health developed educational posters and brochures in 2005 to promote safe handling of chitterlings.
- Put raw un-cleaned chitterlings directly from the container into boiling water for 5 minutes to kill germs.
- Wash your hands after you touch raw chitterlings and BEFORE you touch anything or anyone else.
- Clean everything in the kitchen that raw chitterlings may have touched.
- After boiling chitterlings, washing hands and cleaning surfaces, clean your kitchen
- Cook cleaned chitterlings as usual and enjoy.

FoodNet Projects

- Monitoring trends in Yersiniosis Epidemiology over time
- Evaluating the impact of the Safer Chitterling Preparation Campaign on Yersiniosis epidemiology

For more information:

<http://health.state.ga.us/epi/foodborne>