

# Cysticercosis

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**Cysticercosis** is a cosmopolitan disease that is caused by the larvae of **Longhorn tapeworm** (**Taenia solium**). This disease is characterized by the presence of **larvae** (cysticerci) in organs of the human body such as the brain (neurocysticercosis), liver, muscles and eyes. Neurocysticercosis is the most common parasitic disease affecting the central nervous system. A person usually becomes infected by ingesting uncooked meat or as a result of poor hygiene. The highest incidence of the disease is in South America, Africa and India.

## Symptoms

Symptoms of this disease are very diverse. It depends on the location of the larvae in the body, their number, stage of development and the immune response of the individual. In most cases, the larvae are encapsulated and cysts form. Cysticercosis can be divided according to the location of the larvae: neurocysticercosis, cysticercosis of the eyes, muscles and subcutaneous tissue.

### Neurocysticercosis

Larvae are found in the **brain and spinal cord**. It has the most severe course, which can be fatal without treatment. Depending on the location of the larvae, different forms can be distinguished: **parenchymal**, **subarachnoid**, **intraventricular** (ventricular). Symptoms are usually non-specific, such as: headache, epileptic seizures, increased intracranial pressure, hydrocephalus, limb paresis, psychiatric disorders.

### Ocular cysticercosis

It is relatively rare (1-5%). Parasites may be located in the anterior or posterior chamber of the eyeball, subretinally, or in the vitreous. It causes various visual impairments.

### Muscular cysticercosis

It is usually asymptomatic. It can also affect the cardiac musculature and is often associated with neurocysticercosis. As a consequence of this disease, there is often **pseudohypertrophy of the musculature**

### Subcutaneous cysticercosis

Characterized by the presence of small nodules in the chest and arms.

## Therapy

**Praziquantel** is used in combination with **corticosteroids** to dampen the inflammatory reaction that occurs after the parasite has broken down, or surgically.

## References

### Related articles

- Tapeworm
- Parasitism

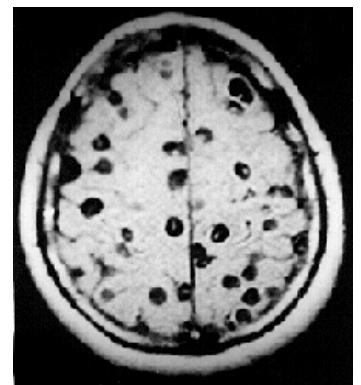
### References used

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Taenia solium scolex



MRI image of neurocysticercosis

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*Incomplete citation of contribution in proceedings.* , et al. *Medical Microbiology : Bacteriology, virology, parasitology.* Prague : Marvil, 1996. 1; {{#if: 8023802976 |978-80-7262-438-6} }  
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