



RACCOON ROUNDWORM (*BAYLISASCARIS* INFECTION)

Baylisascaris infection is a common roundworm infection found in raccoons. In raccoons, the roundworm grows in the intestines and eggs are shed in their feces.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

Humans can become infected with *Baylisascaris* if they ingest roundworm eggs found in infected raccoon feces (poop) or contaminated soil or dirt. *Baylisascaris* infection (raccoon roundworm) cannot be transmitted from person to person. Human infections are rare but can be severe if the parasites invade the eye (ocular larva migrans), organs (visceral larva migrans) or the brain (neural larva migrans).

WHAT ARE THE COMMON SYMPTOMS?

Although rare, infections in humans can be serious and even fatal. Symptoms can appear 1 to 4 weeks after exposure, and include:

- Nausea
- Tiredness
- Loss of coordination
- Loss of muscle control
- Blindness
- Coma

WHAT IF I THINK SOMEONE IN MY FAMILY HAS RACCOON ROUNDWORM?

If you or someone you know is experiencing severe symptoms such as loss of coordination, loss of muscle control or blindness seek immediate medical attention at an emergency department.

WHO IS AT RISK?

People who have exposure to raccoon feces. Most infections occur in young children or others who are more likely to put contaminated objects, dirt or sand in their mouths.

KEY POINTS

- Roundworm eggs are found in the feces of infected raccoons.
- You can get infected if you accidentally swallow eggs from soil, water, or things that have raccoon poop on them.
- Raccoons may use places like sandboxes as their bathroom.

WHAT DO I DO IF THERE IS RACCOON POOP ON MY PROPERTY?

For more detailed information about cleanup please visit: LACDPH website.

RACCOON ROUNDWORM

HOW CAN YOU PREVENT GETTING THIS DISEASE?

The best way to avoid getting sick is to stay away from raccoon feces. To do this, avoid attracting raccoons to your home. Washing your hands after being outside helps prevent many diseases, including raccoon roundworm.



CAN PETS BE INFECTED?

Although rare, dogs and cats can also become infected. Talk to your veterinarian about maintaining your pets on a deworming medication, quickly remove pet feces from your property, and wash your hands after touching your pet to protect your pets and your health.



HOW CAN WE KEEP RACCOONS AWAY?

- Do not feed raccoons or keep them as pets.
- Do not feed wildlife and avoid leaving open sources of food for community cats.
- Feed household pets indoors and never leave pet food or water sources outdoors as it can attract wildlife.
- Pick up and discard other possible food sources around homes such as fruit that has fallen from trees.
- Keep all trash in tightly closed containers.
- Close off access to basements, attics, and crawl spaces and clear brush and trees away from your property and roof line to discourage raccoons from sleeping or defecating nearby.
- Cover all sandboxes when not in use, as raccoons may defecate in sandboxes.
- Be aware that raccoons and other wildlife may also be attracted to fishponds, and bird feeders.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health - Raccoon Roundworm
publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/Diseases/RaccoonRoundworm.htm

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/baylisascaris/causes/index.html

For questions or to find a nearby clinic or doctor, call the Public Health InfoLine at **833-540-0473**. Open every day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ph.lacounty.gov

