



## A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

### *Well Done, Please*

*Trichinellosis Surveillance — United States, 2002-2007*

Recorded: December 15, 2009; posted: December 17, 2009

[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC — safer, healthier people.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the MMWR, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Trichinellosis is a type of foodborne illness caused by eating raw or undercooked meat. It used to be commonly found in pork products, but has become rare in the United States, largely because of improved standards in the pork industry and other food-safety regulations. Most cases today are caused by people eating either home-raised pork or wild game.

Dr. Susan Montgomery is a researcher with CDC's Division of Parasitic Diseases. She's joining us today to discuss ways to prevent trichinellosis. Welcome to the show, Sue.

[Dr. Montgomery] Thank you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Sue, exactly what is trichinellosis?

[Dr. Montgomery] Trichinellosis is a disease caused by infection with a parasite called *Trichinella*. People get trichinellosis when they eat the meat of an infected animal. And that animal would have gotten infected by eating another animal infected with *Trichinella*, usually a rodent or something like a mouse or a rat.

[Dr. Gaynes] Sue, how many cases of trichinellosis are reported each year in the United States?

[Dr. Montgomery] In the past ten years, an average of about 12 to 13 cases have been reported in the U.S.

[Dr. Gaynes] Is there any way to tell if meat is contaminated with trichinellosis?

[Dr. Montgomery] You can't tell if the meat's contaminated just by looking at it because the parasite is microscopic.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the symptoms of trichinellosis?

[Dr. Montgomery] The symptoms typically show up four to six weeks after you eat the infected meat. And those symptoms are fever, muscle pains, swellings, especially swellings around the eyes. But some people with trichinellosis have no symptoms at all.

[Dr. Gaynes] Sue, what should a person do if he or she thinks they might have trichinellosis?

[Dr. Montgomery] If you have the symptoms I just mentioned, you should see your healthcare provider. They can do laboratory tests that will tell whether or not you have trichinellosis.

[Dr. Gaynes] Sue, what are some things people can do to help prevent trichinellosis?

[Dr. Montgomery] Trichinellosis is much less common now because of improvements in how pork is produced, but it's still important to cook meat thoroughly, especially if that meat is from wild game, to avoid trichinellosis.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about trichinellosis?

[Dr. Montgomery] You can go to [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). In the A-Z index, under the letter "T," select "Trichinellosis."

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Sue. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Susan Montgomery about ways to prevent trichinellosis.

Remember, if you are preparing meat, especially wild game, be sure that it's fully cooked before serving or eating to avoid trichinellosis.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

*[Announcer]* For the most accurate health information, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.