

ANIMAL ISSUES



Briefing

Swine Diseases That Have Affected Humans

*Sandy Amass
Department of Veterinary
Clinical Sciences*

Purdue Extension
Knowledge to Go

1-888-EXT-INFO

- Human infection with swine diseases is rare.
- People having the most risk of contracting diseases from swine are those in close, direct contact with sick pigs, for example, pork producers, veterinarians, packing plant workers, and animal researchers.
- Children, the elderly, and immunocompromised people also have a greater risk of infection.
- Risk of aerosol transmission of these diseases to humans is unknown, but it must be rare given the lack of reported human cases.
- Brucellosis can cause flu-like symptoms in people; however, the Indiana swine population is currently free of brucellosis.
- Campylobacteriosis is a food-borne disease contracted through consumption of undercooked poultry, pork, or beef. Unpasteurized milk or untreated water can also be a source of human infection.
- *E. coli* is a food-borne disease. The most harmful type, *E. coli* O157:H7, has not been found in swine in the United States.
- Erysipelas can cause a skin rash in humans in direct contact with infected swine, for example, butchers, farmers, and veterinarians. Severe disease is rare.
- Leptospirosis is spread in the urine of infected animals. Only people in close contact with infected urine are at risk.
- *Pasteurella multocida* causes respiratory disease in swine. Infection in humans is rare. Respiratory infection in pig breeders has been reported, but most human cases of *Pasteurella multocida* are linked to dog or cat bites.
- *Salmonella choleraesuis* infections in humans are extremely rare and can cause death. It is a food-borne disease. Children, the elderly, and immunocompromised people are most susceptible.
- *Streptococcus suis* has not been reported to cause disease humans in U.S.
- Swine flu has infected humans on rare occasions since the 1918 human influenza outbreak. Most infections are mild, and death is rare.
- *Toxoplasma* is a parasite. Consumption of undercooked pork or unwashed vegetables is a source of human infection. Disease is mild in healthy individuals.

- Trichinosis is a food-borne disease. *Trichinella* was detected in only 0.013% of U.S. swine herds. Most human infections are traced to eating wild boar meat. From 1991-1997, only 6 people in Indiana contracted trichinosis.

- Yersiniosis is a food-borne disease. Consumption of undercooked pork is a source of human infection.