

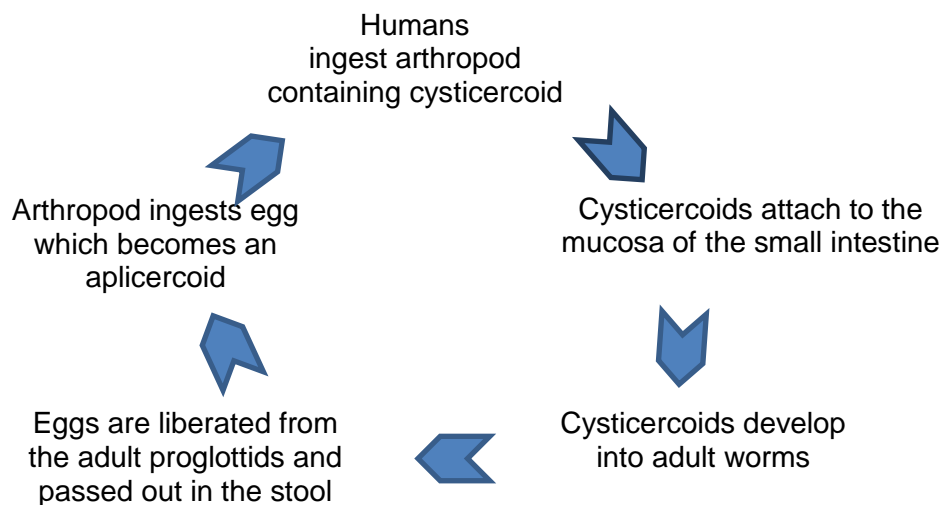
Hymenolepis diminuta

Introduction

Hymenolepis diminuta is a small tapeworm commonly found in rats and mice. It has a world wide distribution in these hosts but is infrequently found in humans, with only sporadic cases being reported.

Life cycle

The life cycle of *H. diminuta* requires an intermediate arthropod host e.g. earwigs, larval fleas and various beetles. Human infection occurs by the accidental ingestion of an infected arthropod which contains the cysticercoids.



Clinical Disease

The symptoms associated with *H. diminuta* infections are few if any.

Laboratory Diagnosis

Diagnosis is based on recovery and identification of the characteristic ova in a formol-ether concentrate of faeces. The ova are large, ovoid and yellowish with a moderately thick shell.

They contain an onchosphere with 6 hooklets and a clear area between the onchosphere and the shell. They measure 70 - 85µm by 60 - 80µm. Adult worms and proglottids are rarely seen in stool samples.



An ovum of *Hymenolepis diminuta*