

Parasitic diseases

Parasitic diseases in Lithuania account for about 0.17 % of all communicable diseases. 1521 cases of parasitic diseases were registered in Lithuania in 2016. Enterobiasis accounted for about 74.4 % of all helminthiases, ascariasis accounted for 12.4 %, and other parasitic diseases accounted for 13.2%.

From 2007 to 2016, incidence rate of enterobiasis declined from 173.9 cases/100 000 population to 39.4 cases/100 000 population, ascariasis - from 19.6 cases/100 000 population to 6.5 cases/100 000 population. The decline in enterobiasis- and ascariasis-related morbidity can be attributed to decrease in the number of tests. These diseases do not display severe clinical symptoms and are often identified during preventive examination, and the affected rarely seek medical attention.

Cases of trichinosis are reported in the country annually. The highest incidence was observed in 2009 and 2010 with 3.3 cases /100 000 population and 2.3cases /100 000 population respectively. In 2015, the incidence of trichinellosis in Lithuania, compared to the EU (the EU's overall ratio was 0.03 cases / 100 000 population) was one of the highest amounting to 0.7 cases /100 000 population. During the period of 2007-2016 a total of 395 cases (including 18 sporadic cases and 34 outbreaks) of trichinellosis were reported. Epidemiological studies showed that human trichinellosis in Lithuania is transmitted through consumption of infected pork and wild boar. Outbreaks of trichinnellosis are recorded every year (2 or more epidemiologically associated cases).

2007-2016 data show that 55.9% of the cases occurred due to consumption of infected pork, 32.3% due to consumption of infected boar, whereas the source of trichinnellosis in 11.8 % cases was not detected.

Illnesses caused by tapeworms are reported in Lithuania every year as well. Over the last decade (2007-2016) a total of 279 cases of tapeworm caused illnesses were reported. Echinococcosis accounted for 92.4% of all tapeworm invasions. If before 2003, only isolated cases of this serious disease were recorded, the situation in 2004 in Lithuania changed – there was a significant increase in the number of cases of echinococcosis. Incidence rate increased from 0.05 to 1.12 cases/100 000 population. During the last decade most of echinococcosis cases were reported in 2009 (36 cases in total), morbidity rate reached 1.05/100 000 population. In 2015, the overall echinococcosis morbidity rate in EU was 0.2/ 100 000 population. That year, the incidence rate for echinococcosis in Lithuania was one of the highest among EU countries (1.12 cases/ 100 000 population), exceeded only by Bulgaria (4.35 cases/ 100 000 population)¹.

Cases of imported malaria are also reported every year; there is an increase in numbers of invasive malaria among tourists and businessmen. According to data 2014, a total; of 6.017 cases of malaria in 25 EU and EEA were reported. France alone accounted for 38% of all the cases (2.299 cases) while UK accounted for 25% (1.510 cases). Incidence rate fluctuated from 0.05 to 3.67 cases per 100 000 population. The highest incidence rates in 2014 were observed in the Sweden (3.67 / 100 000 population). A total of 5 cases of locally acquired malaria were reported (3 cases in Spain, 2 in France)².

¹European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. Annual Epidemiological Report 2016 Echinococcosis. Stockholm: ECDC; 2016

² European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. Annual Epidemiological Report 2016 – Malaria. Stockholm: ECDC; 2016

Over the five years, not only the cases of imported malaria, but other imported parasitic diseases, such as strongyloidosis, schistosomiasis and filariasis were reported in Lithuania.