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Chilomastix bettencourti

Prevalence

- Infection is suspected to be common in conventional colonies of mice, Norway rat, black rat, and other rodents, but unknown in rats and mice.

Disease

- Cyst-forming (lemon-shaped) flagellate found in the caecum and ascending colon
- Trophozoites are asymmetrically piriform and possess three anterior flagella and a short posterior flagellum
- Pouch-like cytostome seen in both forms – thought to be a feeding organelle
- Clinical signs:
    - None directly attributed to these organisms

Transmission

- Faecal-oral – ingestion of infective cysts shed in faeces.

Isolation and Diagnosis

- Motile forms identified by light microscopy of fresh caecal content wet mount – spiraling, jerky movements
- Light microscopy of fresh caecal content wet mount stained with iodine solution
- Cysts may be found by faecal floatation

Prevention and Control

- Considered non-pathogenic – treatment generally not attempted.

Reading

- S.W. Barthold, S.M. Griffey, & D.H. Percy. Pathology of Laboratory Rodents and Rabbits (Fourth Edition), 2016
- J.G. Fox, S.W. Barthold, M.T. Davisson, C.E. Newcomer, F.W. Quimby, A.L. Smith. The Mouse in Biomedical Research (Second Edition), 2007
- D.G. Baker. Flynn's Parasites of Laboratory Animals (Second Edition), 2007
- K.R. Pritchett-Corning & C.B. Clifford. The Laboratory Mouse (Second Edition), 2012