

Causes, Symptoms and Treatment for Fish-Handler's Disease

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ABOUT THE STUDY

The term "Fish-Handler's Disease" is a general one that refers to a human illness or condition that might develop after handling fish or, in certain situations, other aquatic creatures. It is used in both medical and popular literature. Numerous other terms can also be used to express the same thing. These conditions include "Erysipeloid" infection or lesions, fish handler's nodules, fish handler's disease, swimming pool granuloma, fish tank granuloma, fish tuberculosis, and Piscine tuberculosis. The sickness goes by numerous names (boating, swimming pool use), maybe because there have been so many diverse outbreaks connected to occupations (fishermen or lobstermen), interests (tropical fish tanks, pet store workers), or aquatic activities. Researchers also discovered that at least two different types of bacteria, including *Mycobacterium* and *Erysipelothrix*, were the primary infectious organisms responsible for the sickness. Although some of the symptoms brought on by the organisms are similar (primarily lesions on the limbs), other symptoms, diagnosis, and treatments differ significantly.

Causes

Fish handler's disease is caused by cuts or scratches that become infected with the bacteria *Erysipelothrix rhusiopathiae* and other species. An illness that resembles erysipelas but is caused by a different bacterium is what causes this erysipeloid infection. Minor scratches and sores on the skin might occur while handling and preparing fish and shellfish, which can let bacteria in. Fish, especially lobster and other shellfish, must be intentionally interacted with in order for fish-disease handler's to develop. Every time fish and shellfish are handled, fish-handlers' disease can occur. Additionally, skin scrapes or wounds that become infected with *Mycobacterium* species, notably the species *Mortuatum* and *Marinum*, can result in Fish handler's disease. These bacteria can get into cuts and scrapes by handling tropical fish, coral, cleaning aquariums, swimming pools, fishing, lobster collection, and numerous other similar activities. This disease affects people all around the world and is linked to a number of organisms that can exist in freshwater, brackish water, or saltwater. One of the most recent outbreaks occurred in the Chesapeake Bay, when it was found that 76% of striped bass were

Mycobacterium infected. Use gloves to prevent infection and avoid handling fish or other aquatic creatures with obvious surface lesions with your bare hands. On the other hand, cooked aquatic species have not been connected to fish handler's disease.

Symptoms

The symptoms of fish handler's disease, which is brought on by *Erysipelothrix rhusiopathiae* and other species, are as follows,

Two to seven days after a skin injury and subsequent bacterial infection, the syndrome often manifests. The hole is surrounded by a clearly defined red-purple circular zone; the centre frequently vanishes, and occasionally a vesicle (blister) may occur. Every day, the injury's size increases by around 12 inches. Along with joint stiffness, soreness, and enlarged lymph nodes, the infection may also cause burning, itchiness, and swelling where the injection was made. Rarely, the disease may worsen and lead to endocarditis and sepsis (bloodstream infection)(infection of the heart valves).

The symptoms of fish handler's disease brought on by *Mycobacterium* species are as follows,

Although it has been documented that the illness may manifest up to nine months after exposure, it typically manifests two to four weeks after exposure. Skin lesions can be single or isolated, however they are typically many and linear. In addition to skin tone changes, lesions can appear as nodules, abscesses, or ulcers. They may also advance slowly (months).

Treatment

Treatment for fish handler's disease brought on by *Erysipelothrix rhusiopathiae* and other species includes the following,

Immediately wash any wounds with fresh, running water. Use soap and water to carefully clean the wound to get rid of any foreign objects. The most common oral antibiotics used to treat skin infections are penicillin's. Before taking an antibiotic, be sure to let your doctor know if you have any pharmaceutical sensitivity. Even if all symptoms of the infection have disappeared, keep taking antibiotics for the entire time the doctor has advised. One to two acetaminophen, Tylenol, Advil, or

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or Motrin pills every four hours or one to two ibuprofen, Advil, or Motrin tablets every six to eight hours can all be used to treat pain. Joint pain, lymph node swelling, and tendinitis are all potential side effects. Seldom, the illness could worsen and turn into sepsis (infection of the bloodstream). Sepsis frequently leads to endocarditis, which can be successfully treated with *Penicillins*, *Cephalosporins*, and *Clindamycin* (Cleocin). Vancomycin, a medication frequently used to treat endocarditis, is not effective against *Erysipelothrix rhusiopathiae* and other species. Seldom, the illness could worsen and turn into sepsis (infection of the bloodstream). The *Mycobacterium*-caused fish handlers' sickness must be treated with antibiotics. The condition is treated with antibiotics such as rifampin, streptomycin, sulfamethoxazole, trimethoprim, tetracyclines, and others. Depending on the patient's reaction and the severity of the illness, the therapy might last anywhere from two weeks to 18 months. Since corticosteroids might put off treatment and recovery, they should be avoided. In addition to surgical removal of the infected tendons

and joints tissues, severe infections may call for intravenous medications.

CONCLUSION

Anyone who experiences skin sores (painful or not) after coming into contact with fish or other aquatic animals while swimming, boating, or cleaning aquariums or fish tanks should get medical help; people with weakened immune systems should call their doctor right once. To make sure that the right antibiotic is used to address the particular bacterial cause of the illness, speak with a doctor about treatment choices, such as antibiotics. By growing the bacteria from the lesions, it is possible to identify the cause of fish handler's disease in a patient. The purpose of the PCR test is to pinpoint the genetic makeup of bacteria or other organisms unique to the type of bacteria in question. Some people might need to take long-term antibiotics for up to 18 months, along with surgical excision, to prevent infection.