



Some organisms live in very special habitats, they live in or on other organisms. They are called **parasites**. The organisms that parasites live in or on are called **hosts**.

There are many parasites of humans. Headlice are insects that attach themselves to hair and feed on blood from the head. Many humans have worms, such as tapeworms, living in their intestines. This is common in developing countries. The tapeworm can absorb digested food through its skin. People can get infected with tapeworms by eating uncooked pork. The larvae of the worm live in the muscles of pigs. If these larvae are eaten, they get into the human intestine and grow into adults. The eggs of the adults leave the human's body in the faeces. If pigs are allowed into areas where there is human waste containing the eggs, the eggs may well be eaten by the pigs and the cycle starts again.

Not all human parasites are animals. Bacteria are microscopic organisms that can cause disease. Tuberculosis, a disease of the lungs, is caused by bacteria. Viruses are even smaller than bacteria. Colds and flu are caused by viruses. Athlete's foot is caused by a fungus which grows and feeds on the skin between your toes.



- 1 Explain what a parasite is and what it uses its host for.
- 2 Name one disease that is caused by a virus.
- 3 Fungi need damp places in which to grow. How might athlete's foot be prevented?
- 4 Suggest why many religions might class pork as an 'unclean' meat.
- 5 Explain these adaptations of adult tapeworms:
 - a flattened bodies with a large surface area
 - b a head with many hooks and suckers.
- 6 Draw a diagram showing the life cycle of a tapeworm.
- 7 Why do you think tapeworms infect many more people in developing countries than in the UK?
- 8 a What is the microhabitat of a tapeworm larvae?
b Describe the environment of an adult tapeworm.



knowledge, literacy