

## Health Protection Newsletter – Winter Edition

Volume 4 | Issue 4 | Winter 2025



Happy Holidays from the Health Protection Team. In the lead up to this festive season, we would like to share some fun and informative messages to keep you safe during this period.

### Care Settings

### SICPs in Schools/Nurseries

### Tapeworms

### Vaccination Information

### HPT Holidata

### Poem from IPCT

### Care settings

As we move into December, we are already seeing a sharp rise in influenza circulating in the community, alongside the usual seasonal increase in other respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses. Residents in care settings remain particularly vulnerable.

This is an ideal time for you and your team to be fully prepared by:

- Making sure all staff are up-to-date with Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) training
- Conducting refreshers on mask use and donning and doffing
- Reviewing outbreak management plans
- Checking stocks of PPE (visors, gloves, aprons, FRSM)
- Maintaining high standards of day-to-day IPC practice
- Reminding staff about flu vaccination and where to access it - Book [Online](#) or via Staff clinics [Online booking portal](#)

### Important announcement and updates

The Health Protection Team have launched a new dedicated webpage for care settings where you can find:

- Answers to most frequently asked questions
- Quick reference guides for both GI and Respiratory illness
- Direct links to current guidance
- Where to access PCR swabs

Webpage: - [Health Protection Resources - Care Settings](#)

### Guidance Update

Guidance for the public health management of acute respiratory infections (ARI) in community, social and residential care settings has been updated this month, the latest version is available on the Public Health Scotland (PHS) website following the link below.

### [Guidance for the Management Of Acute Respiratory Infections](#)

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## Standard Infection Control Precautions in nurseries and schools

Throughout the year we see many outbreaks of infection in schools and nurseries. We often see increased numbers of outbreaks of gastrointestinal and flu-like illnesses in winter months as people tend to stay together and activities keep people indoors rather than using outdoor spaces.

Many schools and nurseries have already experienced outbreaks but there are many things we can all do to minimise the risk of catching and spreading infections.

Basic Principles:

- Do not attend nursery or school if unwell or have developed new, undiagnosed symptoms (this applies to both children **and** staff)
- Practice regular and thorough handwashing using running water and liquid soap
- Maintain a clean environment
- Follow cough/sneeze etiquette – cough/sneeze into tissue (or crook of elbow), bin the tissues and wash hands (Catch it – Bin it – Kill it)

Staff who provide hands on care for pupils should wear short sleeves and avoid wearing hand/wrist jewellery or false nails. This will help with effective handwashing, limiting the risk of introduction harmful organisms into your mouth and causing illness.

Further information:

- [Health protection in children and young people settings, including education - Publications - Public Health Scotland](#) which is currently under review and will be reissued in the spring
- [National Infection Prevention and Control Manual: Childrens pack](#)
- [Our education resources | Food Standards Scotland](#)
- Stickers and posters are available free from the NHS Grampian Resources Team at [gram.resources@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.resources@nhs.scot)



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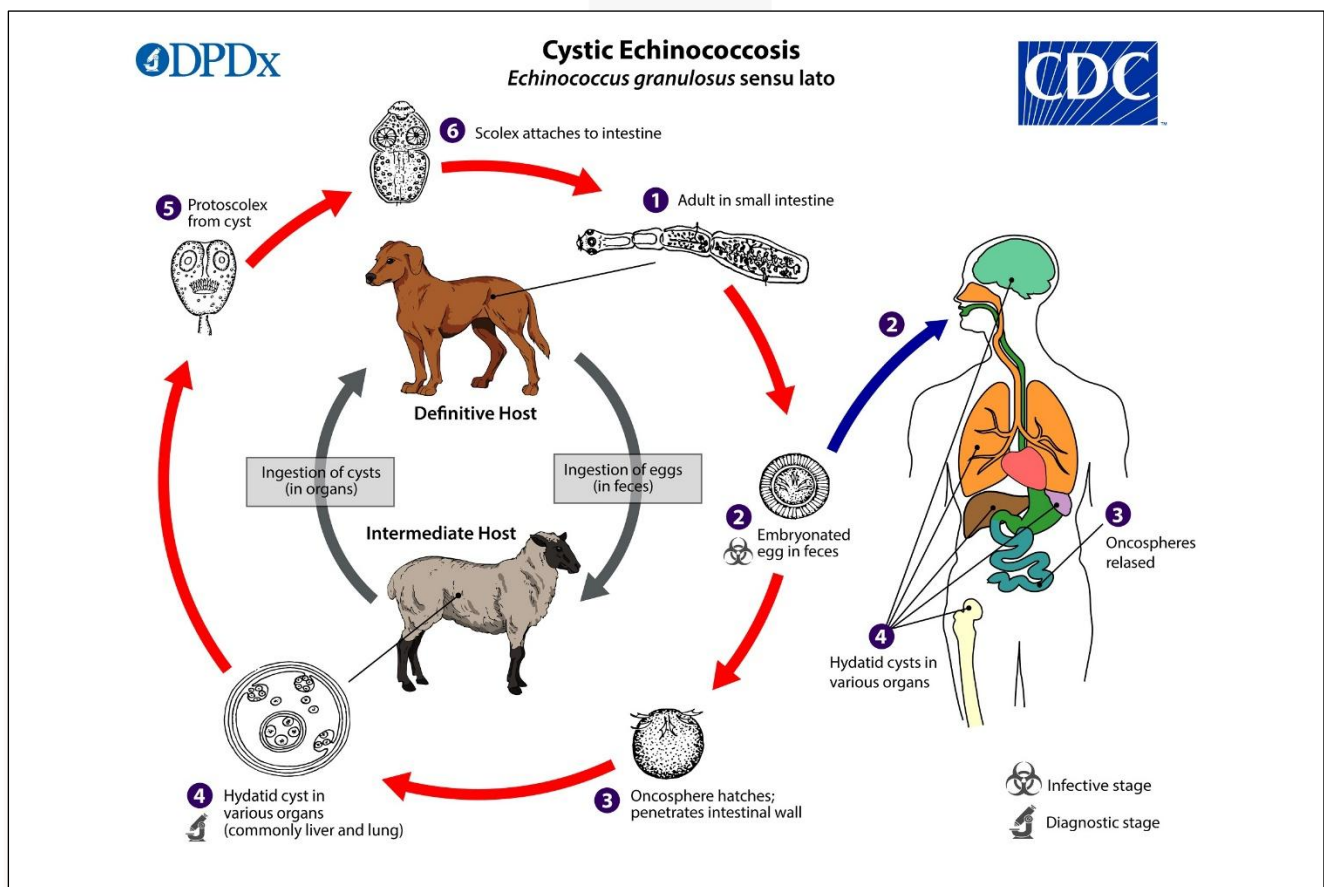
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## Christmas trip with your dog or getting a new puppy?

By Marco Malagoli, Veterinary Advisor, APHA

The festive period is approaching quickly, and many families may be planning of travelling abroad with their dog or preparing to welcome a new (imported) puppy into their home. One of the most underestimated risks is the tapeworm (*Echinococcus multilocularis*). The UK is officially free of *E. multilocularis* - a status it has maintained for over a century. Maintaining this is crucial, as the parasite causes a severe and potentially fatal disease in humans. Human echinococcosis (hydatidosis, or hydatid disease) is caused by ingesting tapeworm larvae the genus *Echinococcus*. *E. granulosus* and *E. multilocularis* are the more common types of echinococcosis.

Below is a representation of their life cycle.



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Infection occurs by ingesting eggs through food (typically unwashed vegetables) water or soil contaminated by infected animals or after direct contact with animal hosts. The eggs are then released in the intestine, and hydatid cysts develop in a variety of organs. If cysts rupture, they may create secondary cysts in other sites within the body. Echinococcus granulosus (sensu lato) occurs worldwide, but more frequently in rural, grazing areas where dogs ingest organs from infected animals.

The infection in humans often remain asymptomatic for years. The rate at which symptoms appear typically depends on the location of the cyst. Hepatic and pulmonary signs/symptoms are the most common clinical manifestations, as these are the most common sites for cysts to develop. In addition to these, other organs (spleen, kidneys, heart, bone, and central nervous system, including the brain and eyes) can also be affected. Rupture of the cysts can produce a host reaction manifesting as fever, urticaria, eosinophilia, and potentially anaphylactic shock. Echinococcosis is often expensive and complicated to treat and may require extensive surgery and/or prolonged drug therapy depending on the cyst's location.

More than 1 million people worldwide are affected with echinococcosis. Prevention programmes focus on deworming of dogs, which are the definitive hosts, slaughterhouse hygiene, and public education. If you travel abroad with your dog or are preparing to welcome a new (imported) puppy into your home, ensure you adhere to the import requirements.

The treatment (drug containing Praziquantel or an equivalent proven to be effective against the tapeworm) must be administered by a Veterinary Surgeon no less than 24 hours before arrival in the UK, and no more than 120 hours (5 days) before arrival. This needs to be recorded in the dog's pet passport or animal health certificate (name of product, manufacturer, date/time of treatment, vet stamp/signature). If this is not adhered to, the dog may be refused entry or placed into quarantine. Dogs travelling directly to the UK from certain countries (Finland, Ireland, Norway, Malta or Northern Ireland) are exempt from the tapeworm-treatment requirement.

## Resources:

- <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/echinococcosis>
- [CDC - DPDx - Echinococcosis](#)
- [Bringing your pet dog, cat or ferret to Great Britain: Tapeworm treatment for dogs - GOV.UK](#)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/imported-disease-summaries-for-dogs-and-cats/imported-disease-summaries-for-dogs-and-cats#echinococcus-multilocularis>

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## Vaccination Information

The Health Protection Team would like to remind GPs to check the vaccination status of newly registered families from overseas. Please refer all family members, especially children to the Vaccination Service if vaccines are not up to date




# FOR SOME FLU HITS HARDER




Healthcare workers are more likely to catch and spread flu.

If you are offered the flu vaccine, you've got a reason to get it.

**All frontline Social Care Workers can Drop-In to any NHS Vaccination Centre to receive their flu vaccine without an appointment.**




Scan the QR code to book an appointment, or for more information about local drop-in clinics visit [www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinedropinclinics](http://www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinedropinclinics)





## Getting the flu vaccine means:

- ✓ Milder symptoms if you do catch flu
- ✓ Faster recovery time
- ✓ Reduced risk of serious illness
- ✓ Less likely to miss work due to illness
- ✓ Less likely to spread flu to friends, family, co-workers



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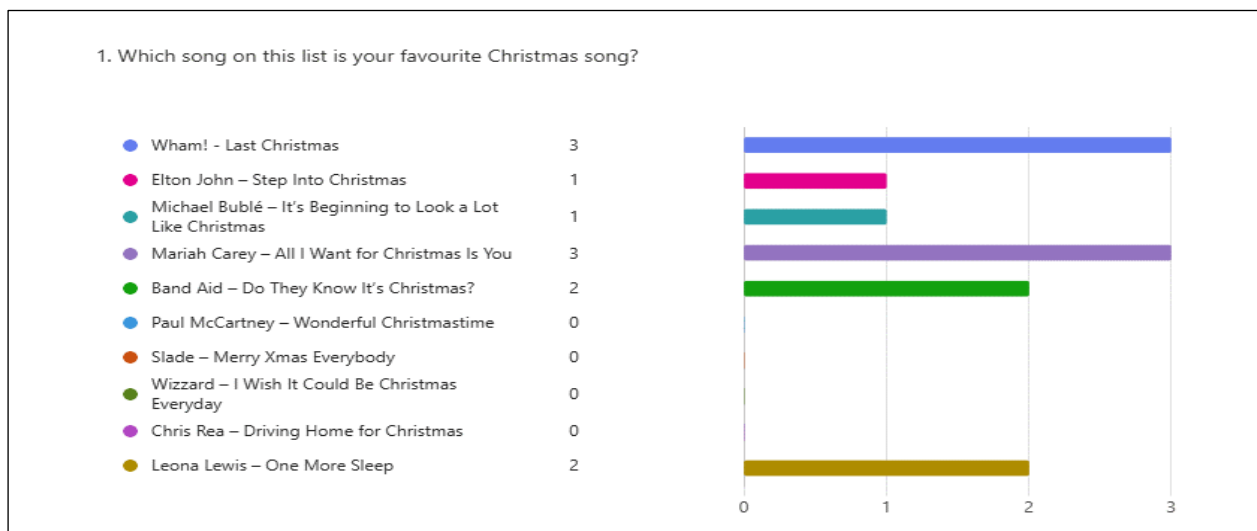
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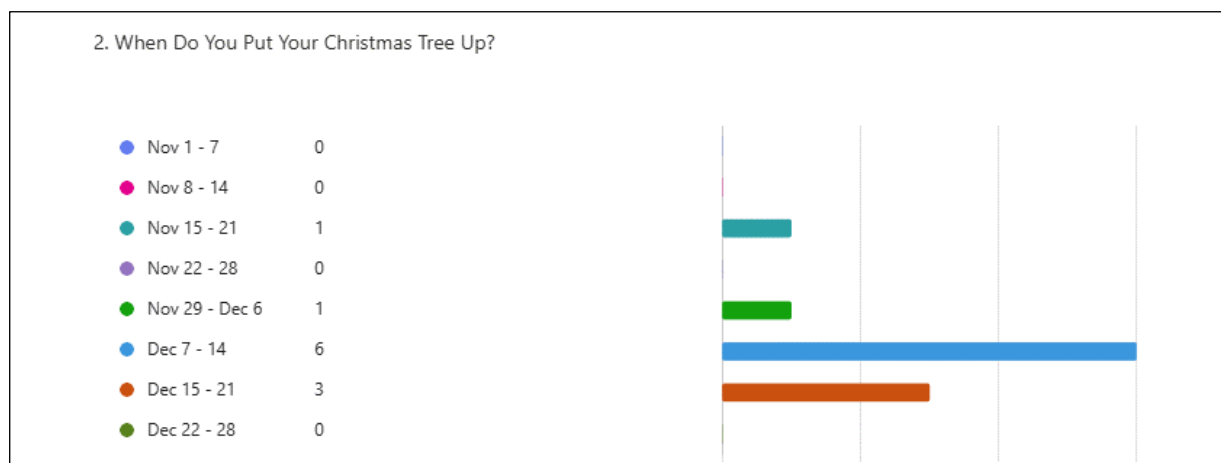


## Health Protection Holidata

In the spirit of the season, we conducted a fun poll on some holiday favourites among the Health Protection Team. What would your teams favourites be?



*Figure 1 - We thought Mariah was going to wipe the floor with one of the most recognizable tunes of all time but we were very wrong!*



*Figure 2 - Festive décor up a whole month before Christmas? Interesting.....*

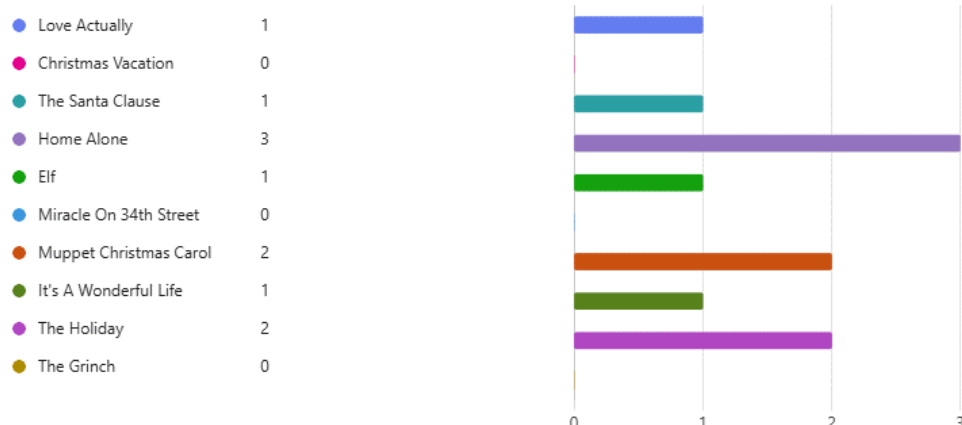
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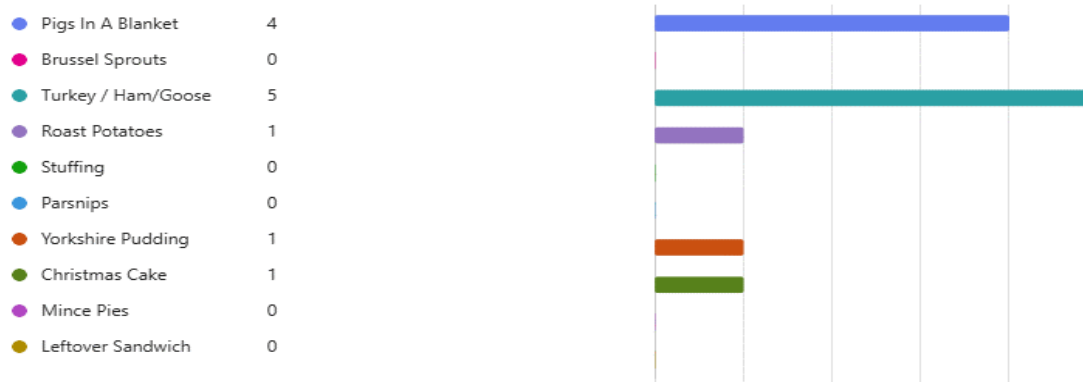
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3. Which of the following Christmas Movies Is Your Favourite?



*Figure 3 - For clarification purposes, this is the first Home Alone movie in 1990. Honourable mention to Die Hard, that just missed out on the shortlist.*

4. What is your favourite item on your Christmas dinner plate?



*Figure 4 - Thought Turkey was mainly associated with another holiday, but I digress. No love for mince pies here, absolutely shocking!*

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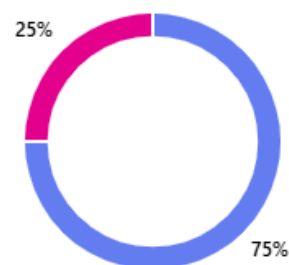
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5. Which of the two do you prefer?

● White Christmas	9
● Warm Destination Christmas	3



*Figure 5 – Safe to say most folk here have been dreaming of a white Christmas all year.*

We sign off the year with a lovely poem from Astrida in IPCT. See you all in the New Year!

Christmas is for sharing joy  
For caring hands and hearts so warm  
But not for germs to swap and swarm!  
So scrub your hands, a clean pair of hands brings extra cheer!  
Don't share what makes us squirm-your sneezes, sniffles or germs  
Spread kindness, love, and the festive charms---  
That's what Christmas cheer's about  
Not coughs or colds from open arms  
Pass on joys like Santa's elves,  
But keep the bugs all to yourselves!



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