EAST MAUI RLW TASKFORCE

FAQ about Rat Lungworm Disease

Q – When someone survives the meningitis provoked by ingesting the parasite, do they develop any immunities against a second infection if ingested again?

A – No, though further studies are needed.

Q – Are dogs and cat at risk, livestock?

A – Yes. In puppies it is deadly. Keep pet food and bowls stored in a place safe from slugs and rinse out the bowls before feeding.

Q – Does UV light or chlorine kill the parasite in catchment water tanks?

A – No. Having proper filters or boiling water is the safest practice. See Protocols for Safe Water Storage, by Chris Baz.

Q – Is the parasite communicable between humans?

A – Only through blood transfusion.

Q – Are mongoose, like rats, a preferable host for the parasite?

A – Unknown, take same precautions around mongoose feces.

Q – Does vinegar, food grade hydrogen peroxide, soap or UV light kill the parasite during the washing?

A – No. Parasite thrives in an acidic environment, so vinegar is not advisable. Hydrogen peroxide and UV light has not proven effective.

Q – Are there alternative parasitic drugs or purge methods tested that can halt the parasite if ingestion is suspected?

A – Only if treatment kills the parasite before it reaches the brain. Treatment should be done immediately or within 3 weeks.

Q – How soon after ingesting slug do symptoms appear?

A – 1-3 weeks.

Q – How long can the parasite survive outside the host?

A – 3 hours.

Q – Which slugs are the preferred carriers?

A – The semi-slug (Parmarion martensi) appears to be the most effective vector, due to a high rate of infection, a high infectious load, and habits that bring it into contact with human foods. However, all slugs and snails can be carriers, including the Cuban slug (Veronicella cubensis) and African Snail.

All slugs should be treated with cautionary suspicion and removed using proper vector control methods (pick up with gloves/tongs/chopsticks and put in slug bottle with 20% salt solution, then dispose of bottle).

Resource Links

- ⇒ Angiostrongylus cantonensis, Rat lungworm (RLW) in East Maui ~ by Chad Meyer, MD
- ⇒ Hilo hospital's protocol for treatment shows promise ~ by Jeff Hansel
- ⇒ Informational Briefs from the 6th International Workshop on Rat Lungworm Parasites ~ The Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, University of Hawai'i at Hilo
- ⇒ More Q & A answers from a University of Hawai'i Rat Lungworm forum from November 2011 ~ The Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, University of Hawai'i at Hilo
- ⇒ Hana's Do-It-Yourself Battle Against Rat Lungworm ~ by Tad Bartimus
- ⇒ Addressing Angiostrongyliasis on Hawai'I Island with Research, Education Outreach, and Host Control ~ by Mary Kathleen Howe
- ⇒ Field Guide of Snails and Slugs in Hawaii ~ Color photos by Kay Howe
- ⇒ Preliminary Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Human Neuroangiostrongyliasis (Rat Lungworm Disease) in Hawai'i ~ Authors: Clinical Subcommittee of the Hawaii Governor's Joint Task Force on Rat Lungworm Disease
- ⇒ Neuro Angiostrongyliasis in East Maui Hawai'i Practitioner Treatment Guide ~ by Dr. Chad Meyer
- ⇒ Neuro Angiostrongyliasis Reading list

- ⇒ **East Maui RLW Taskforce Brochure**
- ⇒ **East Maui RLW Taskforce Rat Lungworm Disease Prevention Slideshow**

PARTICIPATE! Here's how you can help:

Our first priority is to share vector kits and instruction door to door throughout East Maui.
Educate through our website, print materials and activities shared in school, and fact checking.
Contact East Maui RLW Taskforce at info@ratlungworm.info.

East Maui RLW Task Force Facebook Group