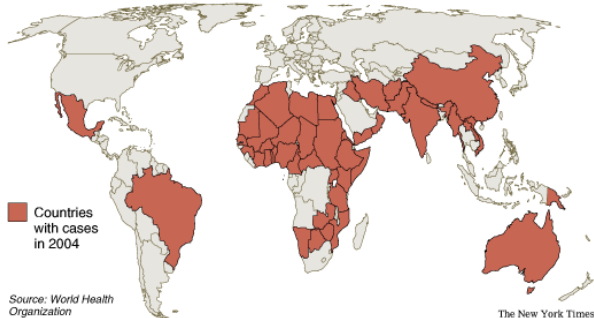


WORM of the WEEK

Trachoma *Chlamydia trachomatis*

<p>Trachoma</p> <p>Trachoma is a disease caused by the bacteria: <i>Chlamydia trachomatis</i>. It is passed through contact with eye discharge of an infected person; this can be on personal belongings, through direct contact or on the leg of a fly. Without treatment, the infection causes irreversible blindness.</p>	<p>Symptoms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swelling, watering, redness of the eye • Red lumps on the eyelid • Eye pain, corneal scarring • Visual impairment • Sensitivity to light 	<p>The Range of Trachoma</p>  <p>Source: World Health Organization The New York Times</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 84 million people in 56 countries are affected. • 8 million people are visually impaired or blinded by the infection
<p>Transmission</p> <p>Flies called <i>Musca sorbens</i> transmit trachoma; they breed in feces that lie in the shade on the soil's surface. When the fly comes in contact with the human eye, the bacteria is transmitted and infection begins. Repeated infection causes damage; this causes the eyelid to turn inward and the eyelashes to scar the cornea which is what causes visual impairment and pain.</p>	<p>Risk Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under age 5 • Adults caring for these children (accordingly, mostly women) • Crowded living conditions • Limited access to proper sanitation, clean water and healthcare 	<p>Treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trachoma is treated with a single dose of Zithromax (azithromycin), repeated use of a topical antibiotic, surgery to invert the eyelid, environmental education efforts (improved sanitation, access to clean water, etc.) and facial cleanliness. • Pfizer donated 36 million doses of Zithromax in 2008, this contract is renewed annually.

Economic Impact

Results in an estimated US \$2.9 billion in lost productivity annually worldwide

Sources:

<http://www.cartercenter.org/health/trachoma/transmission.html>

<http://www.globalnetwork.org/about-ntds/factsheets/trachoma>