

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Outbreak of trichinellosis in Inukjuak

Kuujjuaq, October 23, 2013 – The Department of Public Health is presently investigating an outbreak of trichinellosis in the village of Inukjuak. Since early October, some 15 individuals have presented signs and symptoms of the disease. The diagnosis was confirmed yesterday morning by the parasitology laboratory of the Montréal General Hospital.

In the Arctic, Trichinellosis is a disease caused by a microscopic parasite called *Trichinella nativa*, which is occasionally found in the **meat** of certain wild mammals: polar bears, black bears, wolves, foxes, walruses. The disease can develop after consumption of insufficiently cooked meat from an infected animal. During the eighties, the region saw a certain number of outbreaks of trichinellosis cases linked to walrus meat. However, since 1997, with the application of a meat-inspection program by hunters before distribution and consumption in the villages, no cases related to consumption of Nunavik walrus have been documented.

The source of the outbreak in Inukjuak has not yet been identified. Analyses of food and of food questionnaires among the cases, aimed at identifying the food in question, have so far proven inconclusive. The investigation continues. Until further notice, the recommendation for the Inukjuak population is to fully cook all **meat** harvested from northern mammals.

The NRBHSS is a public agency created in 1978 under the **James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement**. *It is responsible for nearly the entire territory located north of the* 55th *parallel in terms of the provision of health and social services for the inhabitants of the 14 communities.*

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Source:	Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services Public Health Department
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This communiqué is also posted on our Web site at: www.rrsss17.gouv.qc.ca.