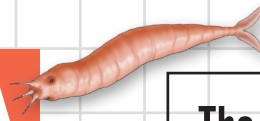


# A FREE RIDE! [PARASITISM]

A parasite lives in or on the body of the host and feeds either directly on the host organism or on the host's food.

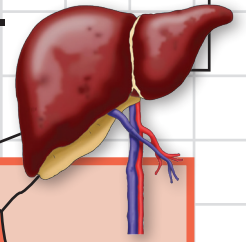
## BILHARZIA



Each year about 2.5 MILLION people in South Africa fall ill with bilharzia.

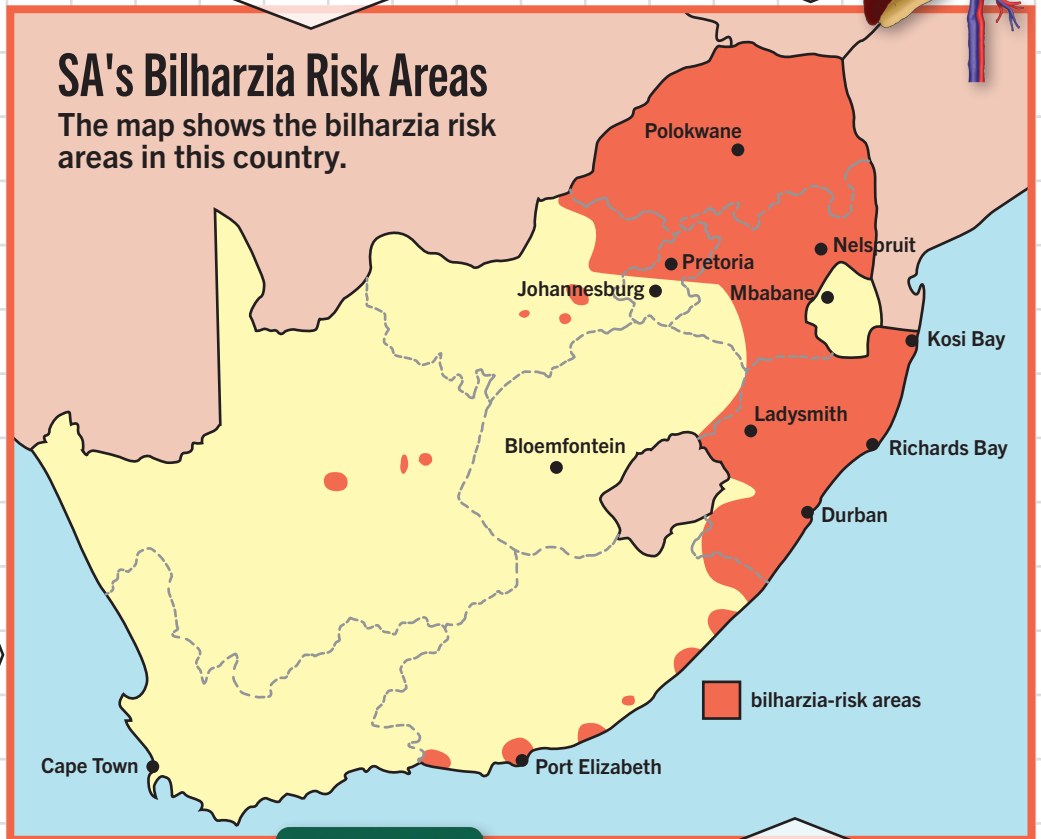
10% of these people have severe infections, which are disabling – but few people die.

The disease causes damage to the blood vessels, kidneys and liver.



### SA's Bilharzia Risk Areas

The map shows the bilharzia risk areas in this country.



Up to 70% of the infections are among children who live in the lower regions of Limpopo Province, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal. Bilharzia mostly affects those children who play or swim in the rivers.

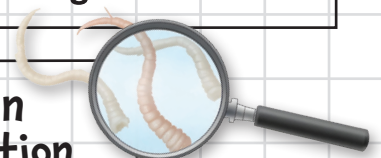


People are infected with the bilharzia parasite through the skin. The worm enters the body when the victim walks, plays or swims in infected water.



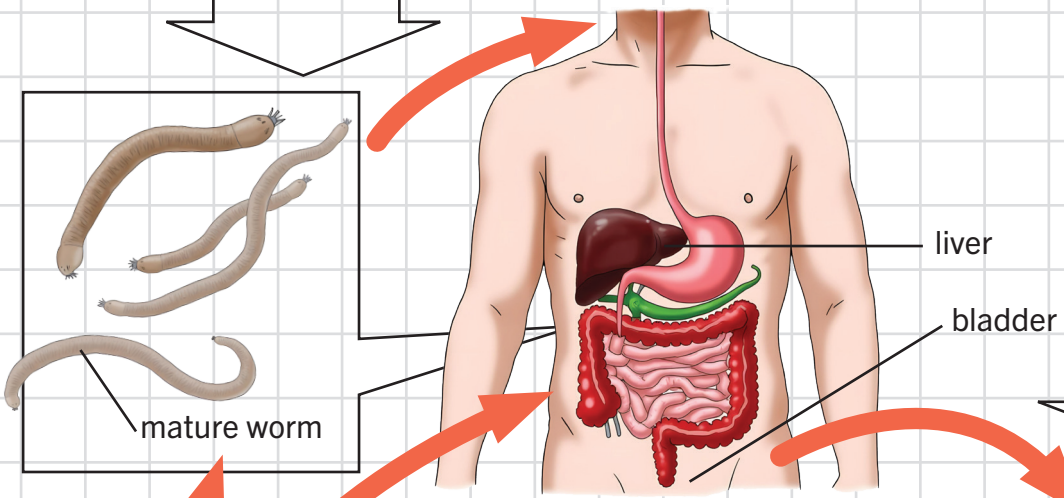
The parasite is found mainly in slow-moving water in rivers, dams and irrigation canals.

It is most common in areas with poor sanitation.



# THE LIFE CYCLE [BILHARZIA]

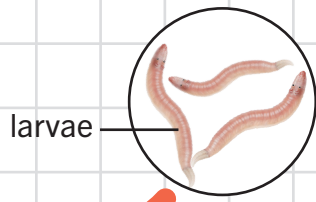
6 The mature larva enters the human through scratches and wounds. They travel through the blood to the liver when they mature into worms. They migrate to the bladder and the cycle is complete.



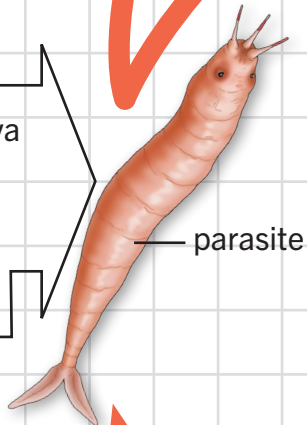
2 The eggs have hooks which cause the carrier pain and sometimes internal bleeding.



1 Bilharzia is spread when an infected person urinates or defecates into a river or dam. The eggs of the parasite are now in the water.



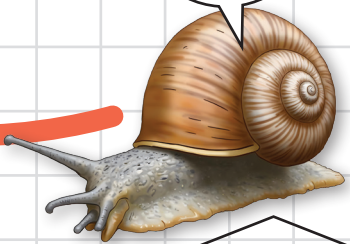
5 The larva leaves the snail and looks for a human host.



3 The eggs hatch into larvae and find a certain snail to be their host.



4 The larva matures and reproduces inside the snail.



**THE PARASITE ALWAYS BENEFITS FROM THE ASSOCIATION AND THE HOST IS ALWAYS HARMED.**

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