

Biomini



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Introduction

Trichomoniasis is a disease of the upper digestive tract that is caused by the flagellate protozoon *Trichomonas gallinae*. In pigeons the disease caused by *T. gallinae* is known as canker. Trichomoniasis affects chickens, turkeys and a wide variety of wild birds.

The parasite

T. gallinae is a flagellated protozoon which is pear shaped and typically has four flagella that arise from the anterior end of the organism.

In chicken and turkey flocks this parasite is spread by the contamination of drinking water.

All pigeons carry this parasite and, in this bird, strains of *T. gallinae* vary in their virulence.

The disease

Affected birds may show a dip in feed consumption and become listless. In pigeons *T. gallinae* invades the mucosal lining of the mouth and occasionally the linings of the pharynx, sinuses, oesophagus and crop producing small circular caseous lesions.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis is by clinical signs and identifying *T. gallinae* in wet smears taken from the mouth or crop.

Treatment

Dimetridazole or ronidazole are effective at controlling this parasitic disease.