



Genus- Physaloptera

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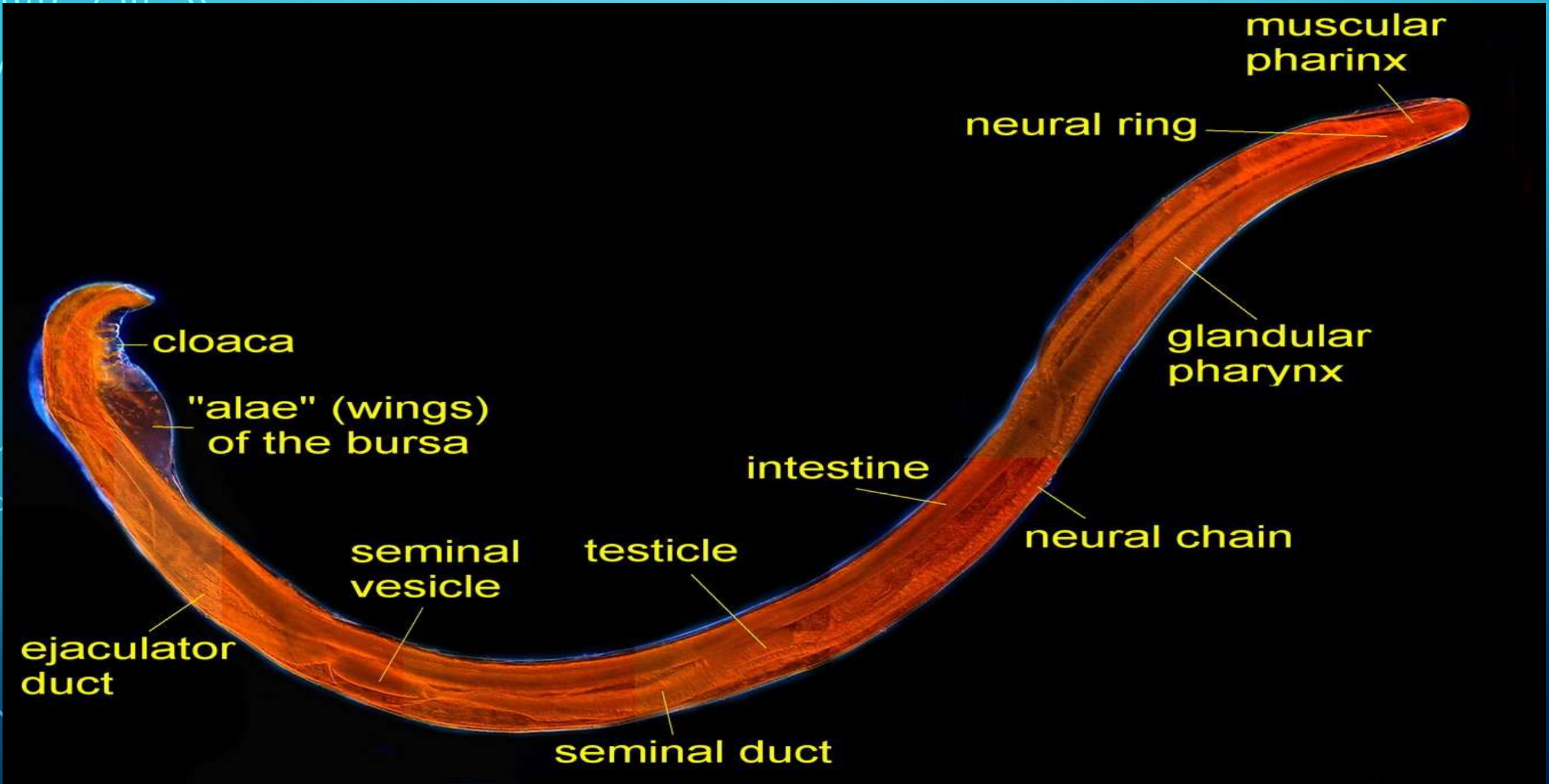
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Physaloptera : Morphology

- These are small, stout, 3 to 4 cm long, medium-sized worms found in the stomach of dogs and cats and commonly called as ‘Stomach worm of dog and cats.
- Adult worms are creamy white, sometimes tightly coiled.
- The females are larger than males.
- The worm's body is covered with a cuticle, which is flexible but rather tough.
- The worms have no external signs of segmentation.
- They have a tubular digestive system with two openings.
- They also have a nervous system but no excretory organs and no circulatory system, i.e. neither a heart nor blood vessels.
- Males have chitinous spicules for attaching to the female during copulation.



Physaloptera praeputialis



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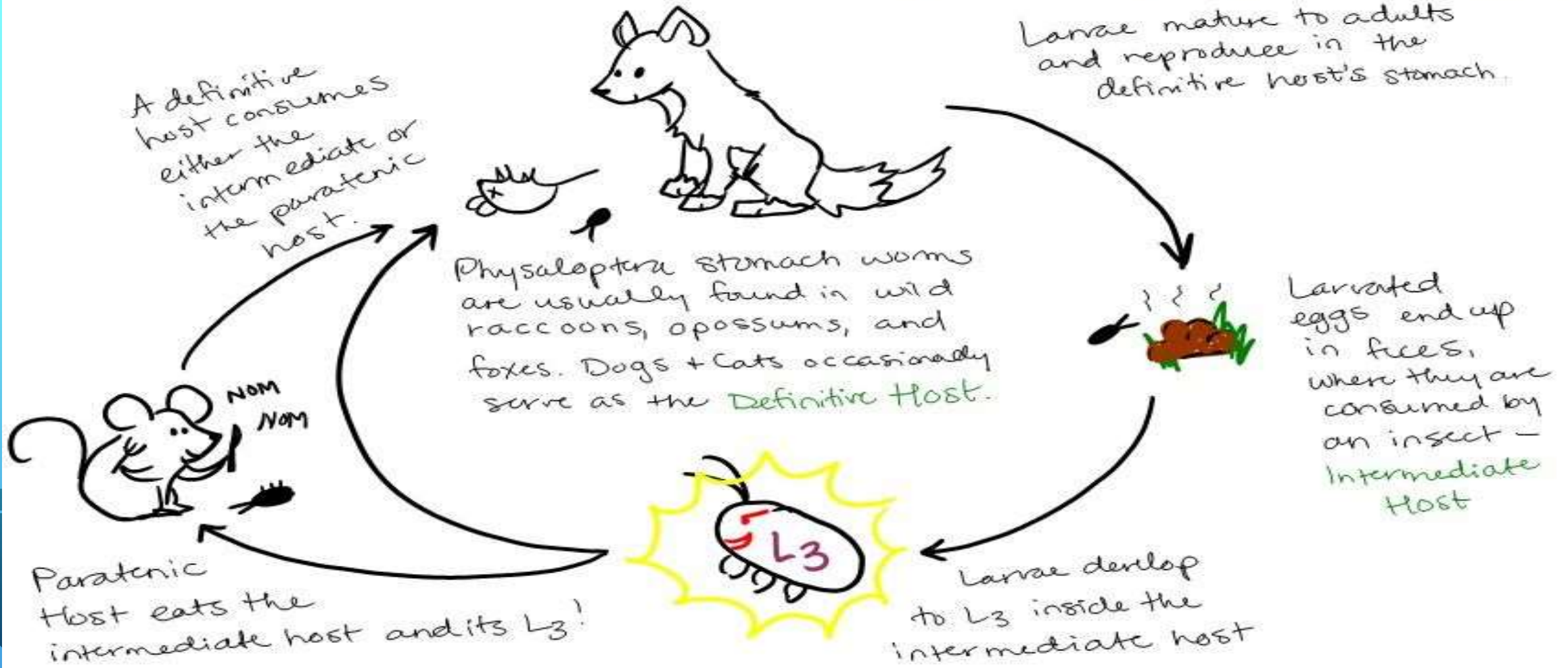
Physaloptera praeputialis

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Physaloptera : Life cycle

- They have an indirect life cycle.
- Dogs, cats and other vertebrates are final hosts, various insects such as Crickets, cockroaches, beetles act as intermediate hosts and Mice, frogs, etc. are transport hosts.
- Adult female worms attached to the stomach lining of a final host produce eggs that are shed with the feces of the host.
- The insects (I.H) eat these eggs, which release the larvae after digestion.
- These larvae become encysted in the insect and remain infective.
- Transport hosts eat these insects and the larvae released in their stomach encysted again .
- When these transport hosts are eaten by dogs and cats, the digested cysts liberate the larvae in the stomach , where they attach to the lining, to adult worms and start producing eggs

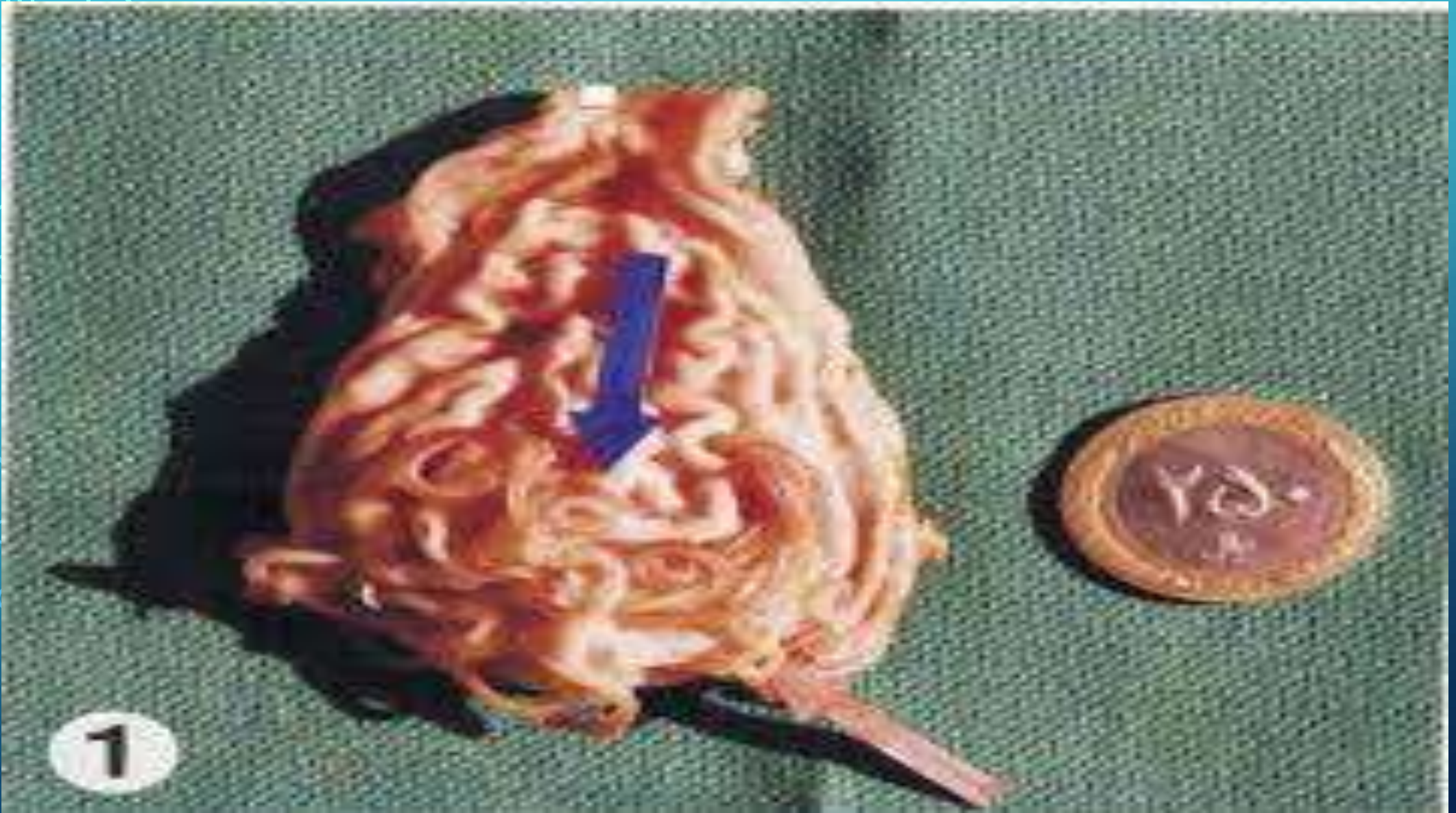
Parrsquiri
Physaloptera "stomach worm"



Physaloptera spp life cycle

Physaloptera : Pathogenesis

- Most infections are remain asymptomatic.
- The presence of worms in the stomach irritates the gastric mucosa causing vomiting.
- Adults may be present in the vomitus although the absence of nematodes in the vomit does not exclude the possibility of an infection.
- Massive infections can cause chronic gastritis, bleeding, anemia, dark diarrhea, chronic vomiting, and weight loss.



Physaloptera praeputialis



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Physaloptera : Diagnosis

- Examination of faecal sample for detection of eggs.
- Gastrosocopy is the most reliable diagnostic method.
- Worms may be found in the vomit of infected pets, especially in puppies and kittens.

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Physaloptera eggs

Physaloptera : Prevention & control

- In the endemic area dogs and cats should be prevented from eating intermediate hosts (beetles, crickets, cockroaches) or transport hosts (frogs, rodents, etc.).
- In kennels, catteries and boarding houses feces and vomits must be thoroughly eliminated as soon as possible.
- Control of intermediate and parataenic host should be ensured.
- Anthelmintic such as Fenbendazole, ivermectin and pyrantel pamoate are very effective against infections.
- There are so far no true vaccines against these worms.