



Bronze-Age Sheep Uncover Ancestor of Black Death

Description

Scientists have discovered an ancient bacteria in a sheep's tooth from a Bronze Age settlement. This bacteria is related to the one that caused deadly plagues like the Black Death. Studying diseases like plague involves looking at both ancient humans and animals. Many diseases, including plague, originated in settlements where people and animals lived close together.

The bacteria that causes the plague, *Yersinia pestis*, has been studied in human remains, but not much in other species. The bacteria likely originated in Eurasia around 3,800 years ago due to the close interactions between humans and animals. Evidence suggests that early outbreaks of plague occurred without fleas spreading it.

Researchers found traces of this ancient plague in a sheep, which is a unique discovery. This helps us understand how the disease spread in ancient times. Studying ancient diseases can provide insight into their evolution and potential threats to public health today. The study has not yet been reviewed by other scientists but is available for further research.

Vocabulary List:

1. **Bacteria** /bæk'tɪə.ri.ə/ (noun): Single-celled microorganisms that can exist either as independent organisms or as parasites.
2. **Settlement** /'setəlmənt/ (noun): A community or group of people living in a new area.
3. **Outbreak** /'aʊt,breɪk/ (noun): A sudden occurrence of a disease in a particular time and place.
4. **Evolution** /,i:və'lu:ʃən/ (noun): The process of gradual development in living organisms.
5. **Plague** /pleɪɡ/ (noun): An infectious bacterial disease characterized by high mortality.
6. **Insight** /'ɪn.saɪt/ (noun): The capacity to gain an accurate understanding of someone or something.

Comprehension Questions

Multiple Choice

1. Where did scientists discover an ancient bacteria related to the one that caused deadly plagues like the Black Death?

Option: In a sheep's tooth from a Bronze Age settlement



- Option: In a human skull from a medieval village
- Option: In a modern laboratory
- Option: In a fossilized tree trunk

2. What is the name of the bacteria that causes the plague?

- Option: Yersinia pestis
- Option: E. coli
- Option: Streptococcus
- Option: Salmonella typhi

3. When did the bacteria likely originate in Eurasia?

- Option: Around 3,800 years ago
- Option: Around 1,000 years ago
- Option: Around 10,000 years ago
- Option: Around 500 years ago

4. What is the significance of the discovery of ancient plague traces in a sheep?

- Option: Understanding the spread of the disease in ancient times
- Option: Proving theories about modern diseases
- Option: Demonstrating the immunity of animals to the plague
- Option: No significance

5. Why is studying ancient diseases important?

- Option: To provide insight into their evolution and potential threats to public health today
- Option: To understand animal behavior better
- Option: To prove a connection between humans and animals
- Option: To explore the history of plague doctors

6. Was the study of the ancient plague in the sheep reviewed by other scientists?

- Option: Not reviewed yet
- Option: Reviewed and rejected
- Option: Reviewed and accepted
- Option: No study conducted

True-False

7. Studying diseases like the plague only involves looking at ancient humans.



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8. Early outbreaks of plague were spread by fleas.
 9. The bacteria responsible for the plague has only been studied in human remains.
 10. The ancient plague traces were found in a cow instead of a sheep.
 11. Ancient diseases can provide insights into their potential threats to public health today.
 12. The interaction between humans and animals likely led to the origin of the plague bacteria.

Gap-Fill

13. The bacteria that causes the plague likely originated in Eurasia around _____ years ago.
15. Studying ancient diseases can offer _____ into their evolution and potential threats to public health today.
16. The study of the ancient plague in the sheep has not yet been _____ by other scientists.
17. Many diseases, including plague, originated in settlements where people and animals lived _____ together.
18. The ancient bacteria related to deadly plagues was discovered in a sheep's _____ from a Bronze Age settlement.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. In a sheep's tooth from a Bronze Age settlement 2. Yersinia pestis 3. Around 3,800 years ago 4. Understanding the spread of the disease in ancient times 5. To provide insight into their evolution and potential threats to public health today 6. Not reviewed yet

True-False: 7. False 8. False 9. False 10. False 11. True 12. True

Gap-Fill: 13. 3,800 15. insight 16. reviewed 17. close 18. tooth



CATEGORY

1. Health - LEVEL2

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