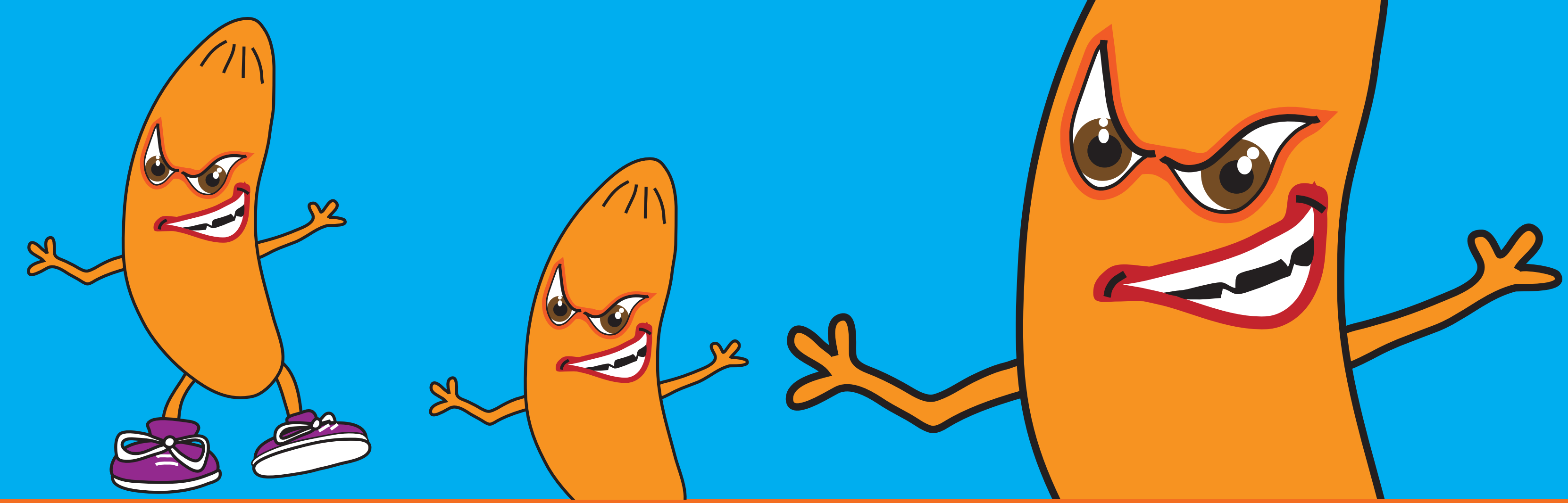


Evolution & Adaptation



Toxoplasma gondii is the most successful parasite in the world. It has adapted to be able to infect and live within all warm blooded animals, including humans.

The disease is more harmful to some animals compared to others.

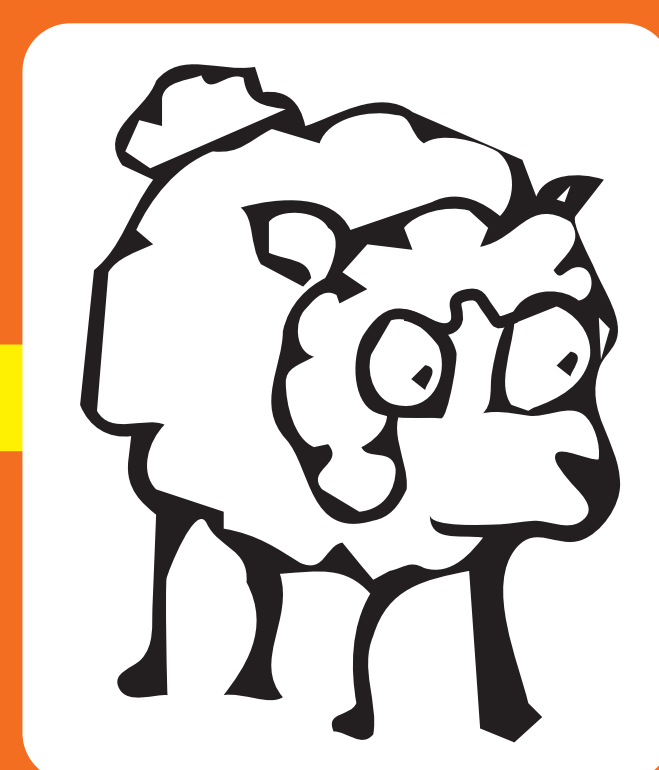
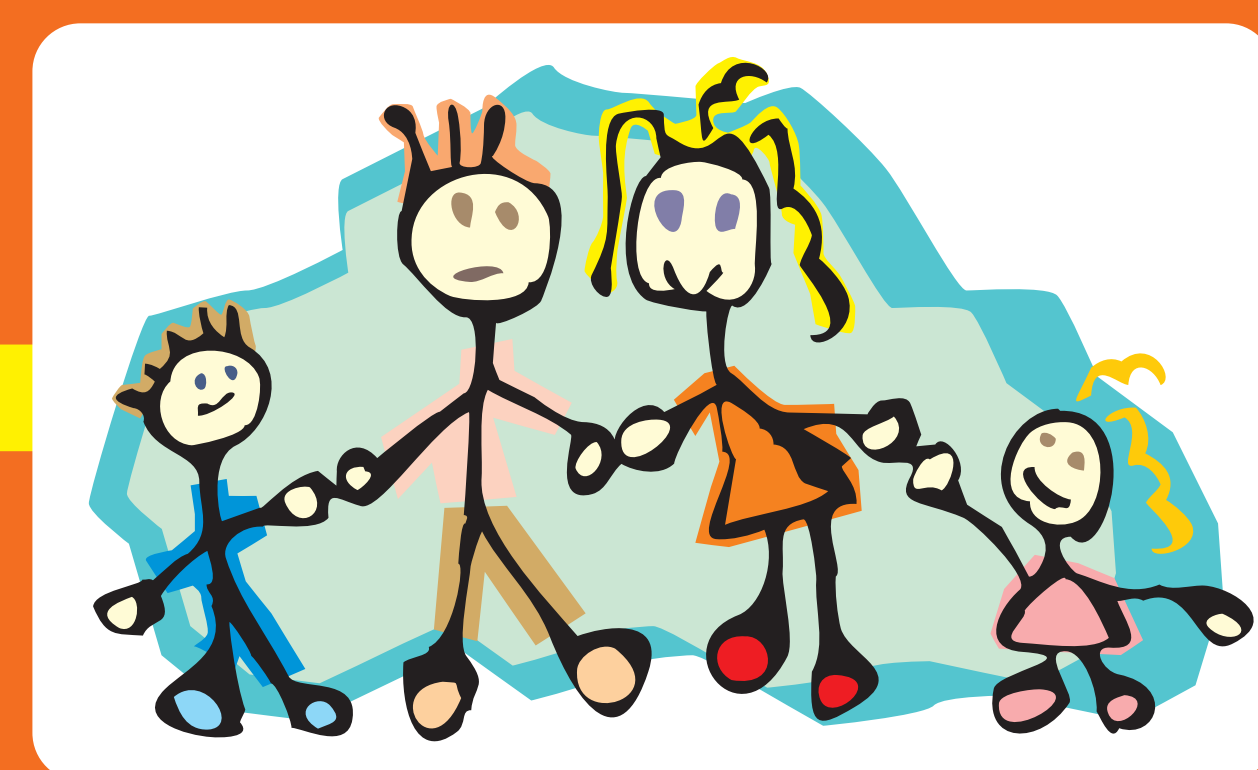
Marsupials such as kangaroos, wallabies and Koala bears are very vulnerable to infection with *T. gondii* which can often prove fatal. This is because these animals largely evolved in the absence of cats (the main host of the parasite) which were only introduced to Australia 200 years ago.

Other groups of animals including, humans, sheep, goats and pigs can also become infected with *T. gondii*, but don't generally show any symptoms.

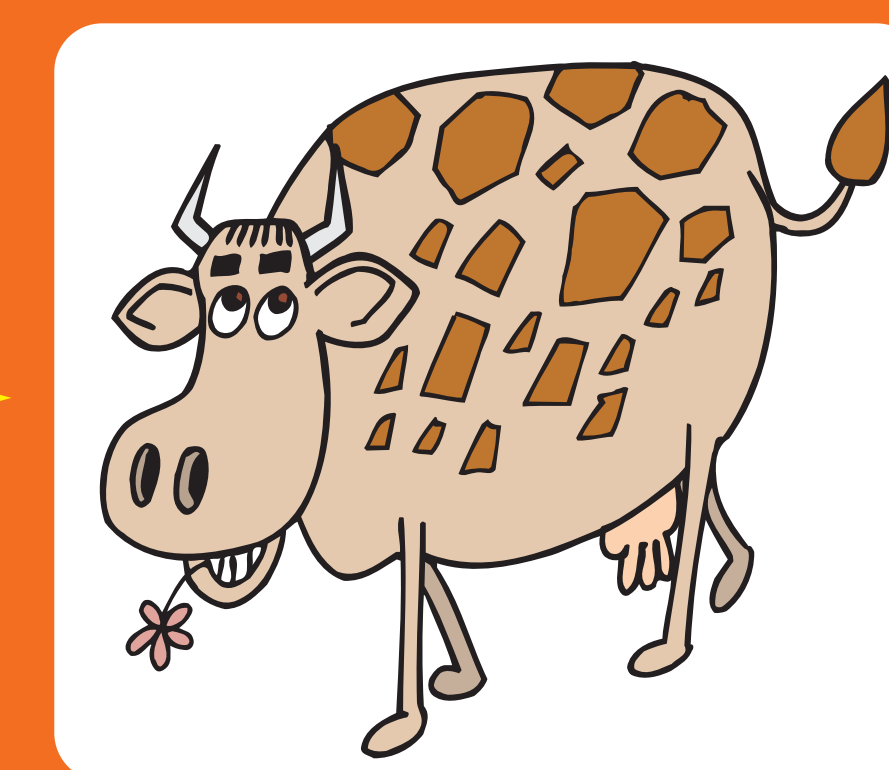
However, the parasite can cause severe disease in the unborn baby or in people with a weakened immune system.

Cattle and horses are very resistant to *T. gondii* and rarely show any clinical signs of disease.

Vulnerable



Resistant



Toxoplasma infection is most harmful to marsupials and least harmful to cows and horses.