

The life cycle of *Hymenolepis diminuta* involves several stages, and is shown in the figure below. The stage that effectively helps normalize the biome of humans and the stage that is fed to rodents to propagate the organism is known as a cysticeroid. Thus, the organism used by humans is known as an HDC (*Hymenolepis diminuta* cysticeroid).

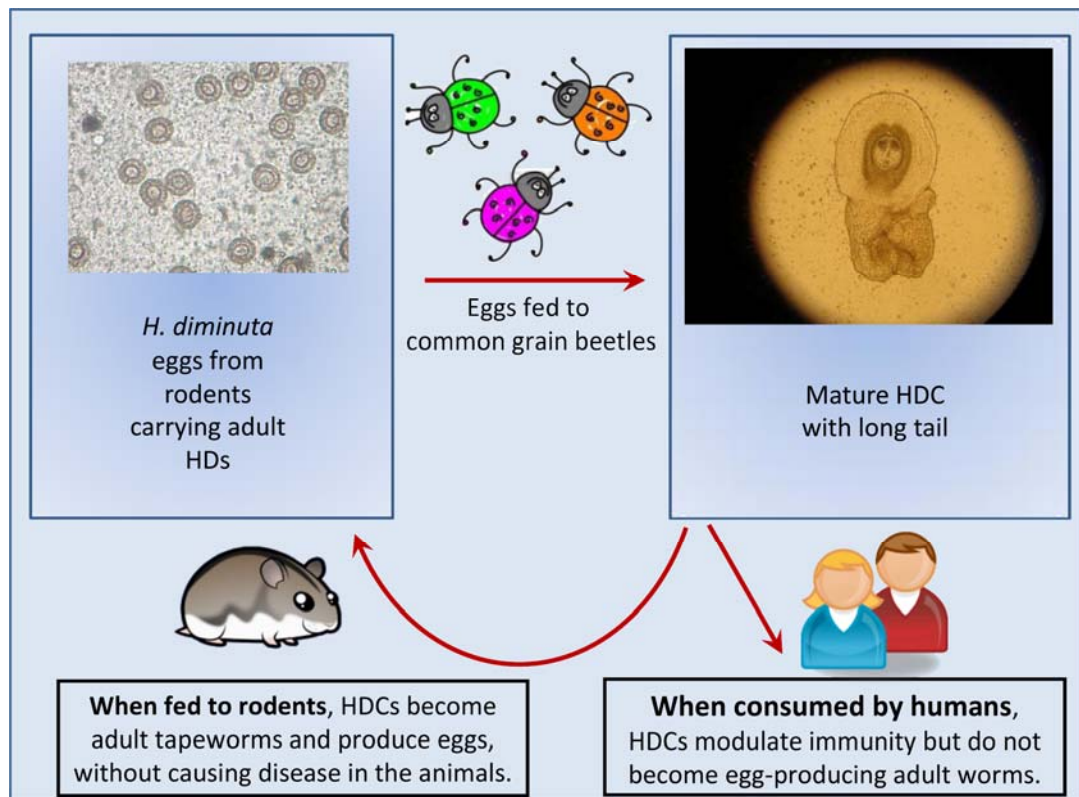


Figure 1. The life stages of *Hymenolepis diminuta* include an egg stage (top left) and a larval stage (top right, called a cysticeroid). The *Hymenolepis diminuta* cysticeroids (HDCs) can effectively colonize a rodent (bottom left) to yield egg-producing adults, or they can be used by humans to help maintain a normalized immune system. Even though exposure of humans to HDCs has a profound effect on immunity, the HDCs do not generally mature into egg-producing adults.