

Cyclosporiasis



What is cyclosporiasis?

It is an intestinal illness caused by a microscopic parasite.

How is it spread?

People can become infected by consuming food or water contaminated with feces (stool) that contains the parasite. *Cyclospora* is not spread directly from one person to another.

Where is cyclosporiasis found?

It is found in many countries. But it's most common in tropical and subtropical regions. In the United States, foodborne outbreaks of cyclosporiasis have been linked to various types of imported fresh produce, including raspberries, basil, snow peas, and mesclun lettuce; no commercially frozen or canned produce has been implicated.

Who can get cyclosporiasis?

Anyone. In the United States, foodborne outbreaks of cyclosporiasis have been linked to imported fresh produce. U.S. cases of infection also have occurred in people who traveled to parts of the world where the parasite is found.

What are the symptoms of cyclosporiasis, and when do they begin and end?

They usually begin about 1 week after exposure. If the infection is not treated, symptoms can last for several weeks to a month or more. Symptoms may include the following:

- Frequent bouts of watery diarrhea (*the most common symptom*)
- Loss of appetite and weight
- Cramping, bloating, and/or increased gas
- Nausea (*vomiting is less common*)
- Fatigue
- Low-grade fever

What should I do if I think I might have cyclosporiasis?

See your healthcare provider.

How is cyclosporiasis diagnosed?

By examining stool samples. Identifying *Cyclospora* in stool requires special lab tests that are not routinely done. Therefore, your healthcare provider should specifically request testing for this parasite. And more than one stool sample from different days might be needed. Your healthcare provider also might have your stool checked for other organisms that can cause similar symptoms.

How is cyclosporiasis treated in people with symptoms?

It usually is treated with the antibiotic trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole (*also known as Bactrim*, Septra*, or Cotrim**). People with diarrhea also should rest and drink plenty of fluids.

What can I do to prevent cyclosporiasis?

- Avoid food or water that may have been contaminated with stool.
- When traveling, follow [safe food and water habits](#).

For more information, please visit www.cdc.gov/parasites/cyclosporiasis.

* Use of trade names is for identification only and does not imply endorsement by the Public Health Service or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.