



Cyclosporiasis Fact Sheet

What is Cyclosporiasis?

Cyclosporiasis is an intestinal illness caused by a microscopic parasite called *Cyclospora cayetanensis*.

How do people get infected?

People get infected by eating or drinking something contaminated with stool that contains the parasite. Person-to-person spread is unlikely. The parasite needs days to weeks after being passed in a bowel movement before it becomes infectious.

Who is at risk?

People who live in or travel to tropical or subtropical regions (where the parasite is more common). In the United States, outbreaks have been linked to imported fresh produce.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms usually begin within seven days and can include watery diarrhea (which can be frequent and sometimes explosive), loss of appetite, weight loss, stomach pain or cramps, bloating and increased gas, nausea, feeling very tired, vomiting, body aches, headache, and fever. Flu-like symptoms may also be noted. Some people do not have any symptoms but can still be infected.

How long do symptoms last?

If not treated, the illness can last from a few days to more than a month. Symptoms may go away and return, and it is common to feel very tired during the illness.

How do I know if I have Cyclosporiasis?

Special lab tests are needed, so a health care provider must request a stool sample specifically for *Cyclospora*. Your health care provider may also check for other infections that cause similar symptoms.

Should you stay home if sick?

People with diarrhea should stay home from work, school, and childcare. You may return after the diarrhea stops, but you must wash your hands well after using the bathroom.

How is it treated?

The recommended treatment combines sulfamethoxazole and trimethoprim antibiotics (also called Bactrim). People with diarrhea should rest and drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated.

How can I prevent infection?

Avoid food or water that may be contaminated with stool. People who have had Cyclosporiasis can get infected again.

For additional information, please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/cyclosporiasis/index.html>