



Tarrant County Public Health

A healthier community through leadership in health strategy

The Facts About Cyclosporiasis

What is Cyclospora?

Cyclospora cayentanensis is a parasite composed of one cell, too small to be seen without a microscope. This parasite causes an intestinal infection called Cyclosporiasis.

How is Cyclospora spread?

Cyclospora is spread by people ingesting food or water contaminated with the Cyclospora organism. Imported fresh produce items have been implicated in previous outbreaks in the United States. To date, no specific food items have been implicated in the current outbreak. The time between becoming infected and becoming sick is usually about one week. Cyclosporiasis is not likely to be transmitted directly from one person to another.

Who is at risk for Cyclospora infection?

People can become infected with *Cyclospora* by consuming food or water contaminated with the parasite. People living or traveling in countries where Cyclosporiasis is endemic, including certain tropical or subtropical regions of the world may be at increased risk for infection.

What are the symptoms of Cyclospora infection?

Symptoms of Cyclosporiasis include watery diarrhea, loss of appetite, weight loss, abdominal pain and cramping, bloating, gas, nausea, and fatigue. Less common are vomiting, body aches, and headache. Fever is not common with Cyclosporiasis. If you think you might be infected with Cyclospora, see your healthcare provider. People who have these symptoms, especially watery diarrhea that has lasted several days, should see their primary health-care provider. Ill people should be monitored for signs of dehydration.

How long can the symptoms last?

If not treated, the illness may last from a few days to a month or longer. Symptoms may seem to go away and then return one or more times (relapse). It is also common to feel very tired.

How is Cyclospora infection diagnosed?

Diagnosis of Cyclosporiasis is made by performing a special laboratory test on a stool sample for *Cyclospora*. Your health-care provider will ask you to submit stool specimens to see if you are infected. You might be asked to submit more than one specimen from different days. Identification of this parasite in stool requires special laboratory tests that are not routinely done. Therefore, if indicated, your health-care provider should specifically request testing for Cyclospora. In addition, your health-care provider might have your

For more information, call 817-321-4700 or visit <http://health.tarrantcounty.com>

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