Cyclospora

What is cyclospora?

Cyclospora is a parasite that causes an illness that affects the stomach and intestines. The Cyclospora infection is called cyclosporiasis.

How do I get cyclospora?

You must ingest (swallow or eat) the Cyclospora parasite to become infected. Cyclospora is usually spread through the following:

- > Infection occurs by a person putting something in his/her mouth that was contaminated with infected feces (stool), such as swallowing contaminated water or food.
- People who become infected with *Cyclospora* will have the parasite in their feces, but this parasite needs time (days or weeks) after being passed in a bowel movement to become infectious; the amount of time required depends on factors such as temperature and humidity. Therefore, it is uncommon for Cyclospora to be passed directly from one person to another. It is not known whether or not animals can be infected and pass infection to people.
- > Cyclospora is **NOT** spread from one person to another by coughing or sneezing, sharing drinks, hugging or kissing.

Symptoms

Symptoms begin about 7 days after ingesting the *Cyclospora* parasite. Symptoms may come and go periodically for a few weeks, some people who are infected with Cyclospora do not have any symptoms. Symptoms include:

- Frequent diarrhea (often watery) can lead to severe dehydration
- > Stomach cramping, bloating and gas
- ➤ Loss of appetite and weight loss
- > Some people may experience low-grade fever, nausea and vomiting

Prevention

Never drink water from lakes, streams, etc. unless you have boiled (for one minute) or filtered it first – the parasite is very small and not all filters will remove the parasite from the water. The filter label will tell you if it can remove Cyclospora.



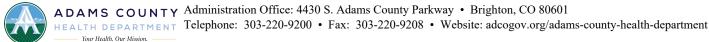
Hand washing steps:

- Use soap and warm running water.
- Scrub hands for at least 20 seconds; use a nail brush.
- 3. Wash all surfaces:
 - Between fingers
 - Under fingernails
 - · Back of hands
 - Wrists
- 4. Rinse well and dry hands with a clean paper towel.
- Avoiding water or food that may be contaminated with stool may help prevent *Cyclospora* infection.
- Wash your hands after using the restroom and before preparing food or handling baby toys. You may have and spread the parasite even if you do not have any symptoms.
- Always wash your hands and the child's hands after diapering or helping with toilet training.

Treatment for cyclospora

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).

(continued on back)



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Cyclospora (continued)

If you think you have Cyclospora

- > See your health care provider immediately.
- ➤ If your job involves handling food, caring for small children, or if you work in health care, do not go to work and contact your health care provider.
- ➤ Children who might have cyclospora should not go to child care settings especially if they have diarrhea.
- > Do not swim in recreational water for at least 2 weeks after diarrhea stops.
- Do not prepare food for others.