



CYCLOSPORIASIS

What is cyclosporiasis?

Cyclospora cayetanensis is a parasite composed of one cell that is too small to be seen without a microscope. This parasite causes an intestinal infection called cyclosporiasis.

Who gets cyclosporiasis?

Anyone can get cyclosporiasis. 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.

How is cyclosporiasis spread?

Cyclospora is spread by people ingesting something – such as food or water – that was contaminated with feces (stools). *Cyclospora* needs time (typically, at least one to two weeks) after being passed in a bowel movement to become infectious for another person. It is unlikely that *Cyclospora* is passed directly from one person to another.

What are the symptoms of cyclosporiasis?

Symptoms usually begin about one 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 (loose stools), the most common symptom
- Loss of appetite and weight
- Cramping, bloating, and/or increased gas
- Nausea (vomiting is less common)
- Fatigue
- Low-grade fever.

How soon do symptoms appear?

Symptoms of cyclosporiasis begin an average of seven days (the range is two days to more than two weeks) after ingesting sporulated oocysts (the infective form of the parasite).

Should an infected person be excluded from work or school?

No exclusions are specified for cyclosporiasis. Any individual with diarrhea (loose stools) should be excluded from work or school until they have no diarrhea for 48 hours.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the treatment for cyclosporiasis?

Cyclosporiasis can be treated with antibiotics, although most healthy persons will recover without antibiotic treatment. It is important that individuals with diarrhea rest and drink plenty of fluids.

What can a person or community do to prevent the spread of cyclosporiasis?

Avoiding food or water contaminated with stool may help prevent *Cyclospora* infection. People who have previously been infected with *Cyclospora* can become infected again.

There is no vaccine for cyclosporiasis. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) monitors the occurrence of cyclosporiasis in the U.S. and helps state health departments identify and investigate cyclosporiasis outbreaks to prevent additional cases of illness.

Resources

CDC, https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/cyclosporiasis/gen_info/faqs.html#what_cyclo