

# Cyclospora Infection

## What is Cyclospora?

Cyclospora is a microscopic parasite that can affect the intestinal tract and cause diarrhea. It is associated with foreign travel or eating imported foods that are contaminated with the parasite (i.e. raspberries).

## What are the symptoms of Cyclospora?

Watery diarrhea is the most common symptom and it usually starts within 1 week of eating or drinking food or water contaminated with the parasite. It may last a few days to a month or longer. Symptoms are known to go away and then return. Other symptoms may include loss of appetite, weight loss, muscle aches, nausea, bloating with gas and fatigue.

## How is Cyclospora spread?

Cyclospora is spread by eating or drinking contaminated food or water. Person-to-person spread is unlikely. Outbreaks in the United States have been associated with imported raspberries and with other fresh produce. Produce can become contaminated by irrigation water, during harvest, packaging or by food handlers.

## How is Cyclospora treated?

Health care professionals can request a special test on a stool sample to identify Cyclospora. Once identified, treatment is by antibiotics.

## What can be done to minimize the spread of Cyclospora?

Be cautious of what you eat when visiting developing countries especially where Cyclospora is common. Thoroughly wash fruits and vegetables especially if they are to be eaten raw. This will help reduce the risk of spread if they have been contaminated.

*This fact sheet provides basic information only. It must not take the place of medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always talk to a health care professional about any health concerns.*

For further information contact the Infectious Disease Program at 625-8318  
or toll free 1-888-294-6630, ext. 8318.

Cyclospora, ID-FS-ENT-08  
February 2016

