



What is *Cyclospora* infection?

Cyclospora infection, or cyclosporiasis, is an intestinal illness caused by the microscopic parasite *Cyclospora*. People get infected by eating food or drinking water that is contaminated with the parasite.

Cyclospora infection can occur throughout the year but is most frequently seen in the U.S. during the spring and summer months (May through August). *Cyclospora* infection is not usually life-threatening.

Who can get *Cyclospora* infection?

Cyclospora can infect people of any age. It is commonly associated with travel to tropical or subtropical regions of the world. In the U.S., outbreaks of cyclosporiasis have been linked to various types of fresh produce. People can get infected with *Cyclospora* more than once.

What are the typical symptoms of *Cyclospora* infection and when do they begin?

Cyclospora infects the small intestine, a part of your digestive system. Common symptoms include:

- Watery, sometimes explosive, diarrhea
- Abdominal cramping and bloating
- Nausea
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss

Symptoms usually begin about one week after exposure but can range from two days to two weeks.

How is *Cyclospora* infection diagnosed?

Cyclospora infection is diagnosed by identifying the parasite in samples of stool (poop). Laboratory tests can have a hard time detecting *Cyclospora*. A person may have to submit multiple samples on different days to detect the parasite.

How is *Cyclospora* infection treated?

Cyclospora infection can be treated by an antibiotic called trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole, usually for 7 to 10 days. If you have an allergy to sulfa drugs, discuss alternatives with your doctor.



Most people with healthy immune systems will recover without treatment. If not treated, however, the illness may last anywhere from a few days to a month or longer.

Rest and drinking plenty of fluids is also important for those who have diarrhea.

How does *Cyclospora* infection spread?

Cyclospora spreads when people eat food or drink water that is contaminated with stool (poop). Infection does not usually spread directly from one person to another.

Outbreaks in the U.S. have been linked to various types of fresh produce, including salad mix, berries, cilantro, basil, green onions, and snow peas.

What can be done to prevent *Cyclospora* infection?

Key prevention steps include:

- Wash hands with soap and water before and after handling raw fruits and vegetables
- Rinse fruits and vegetables, including herbs, under running water
- Scrub firm produce, such as melons or cucumbers, with a clean produce brush
- Cut away damaged areas on fruits and vegetables before eating
- Cook food thoroughly, which can kill *Cyclospora*
- Refrigerate cut, peeled, or cooked produce as soon as possible (within two hours)
- Avoid food or water that may be contaminated, especially when traveling to [endemic regions](#)

Where can I get more information about *Cyclospora* infection?

You can visit the following pages from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for more information:

About Cyclosporiasis - <https://www.cdc.gov/cyclosporiasis/about/index.html>

Preventing Cyclosporiasis - <https://www.cdc.gov/cyclosporiasis/prevention/index.html>

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