



## CRYPTOSPORIDIOSIS

**Cryptosporidiosis is the disease often called "crypto".** It is caused by a parasite. Cryptosporidium infections can be caused by swallowing only a small amount of cryptosporidia through contaminated water or food. It can be spread through fecal-oral transmission by feces of an infected person or an object that has been contaminated with the infected person's feces. The illness that results is an infection of the bowel. The first symptoms may appear 2 - 10 days after a person becomes infected and they will normally last for about 2 weeks or less although some individuals may recover then get worse again.

**Not everyone who is infected will feel sick.** If symptoms do occur they may include:

- watery diarrhea
- stomach cramps
- nausea
- vomiting and mild fever

**Anyone can get cryptosporidiosis.**

Those at greater risk are:

- People in close contact with children or adults who have cryptosporidiosis.
- People who drink untreated water from lakes or rivers.
- Children in child care centers.

There is no prescribed antibiotics for this illness but some medications can lessen the severity of the symptoms.

**To prevent the infection:**

- Wash hands thoroughly after changing diapers or whenever fecal soiling occurs.
- Avoid sexual practices that may result in hand or mouth exposure to feces.
- Avoid direct exposure to cattle or other farm animals and if exposed wash your hands thoroughly immediately thereafter.
- Do not drink directly from lakes, rivers, streams or other such surface water supplies unless boiling the water first for five minutes. Use this boiled water for drinking, brushing teeth, making ice, cooking food and washing dishes.
- Avoid swallowing water when swimming, especially in lakes, ponds or rivers.
- Wash all fruits and vegetables before eating.
- Drink only pasteurized milk and pasteurized apple cider.
- Do not eat unpasteurized milk products.