



## Communicable Diseases AMOEBIASIS

### What is Amoebiasis?

Amoebiasis is an intestinal illness caused by a parasite, called *Entamoeba histolytica*.

### How does a person get Amoebiasis?

Amoebiasis is spread in the stool (bowel movement) by:

- Drinking water or eating food that is contaminated with the parasite
- Person-to-person contact
- Sexual contact

Those who are at greater risk are:

- People in close contact with children or adults who have Amoebiasis
- People who drink water from rivers, lakes or ponds that has not been properly treated
- Children who attend childcare centers
- Travelers to tropical areas

### What are the signs and symptoms?

Most people who are infected do not have symptoms. If symptoms occur, they usually appear 2-4 weeks following infection. Symptoms can occur several months or years later and may include:

- Chills
- Fever
- Stomach cramps
- Diarrhea with blood or mucous
- Constipation
- Weight loss

### How is Amoebiasis treated?

Treatment with medicine can shorten the illness. Consult with your health care provider.

It is recommended that all household members be tested for Amoebiasis if one member is ill.

### How is Amoebiasis prevented?

Handwashing is the best way to prevent the spread of this illness. Wash your hands:

- After using the bathroom
- After diapering a child
- Before and after preparing or handling food or drink
- Before eating

Avoid drinking untreated water.

Wash or peel all fruits and vegetables before eating them.

**NOTE:** Do not attend daycare, school, or a place of work until you no longer have diarrhea.