

Cryptosporidiosis (Crypto)

Cryptosporidiosis is an illness caused by the parasite *Cryptosporidium parvum*. Symptoms may include watery diarrhea, cramps, nausea, vomiting, and a low fever.

The disease occurs worldwide and outbreaks have been associated with improperly filtered drinking water supplies, swimming pools, unpasteurized apple cider, and person-to-person spread.

How Is Crypto spread?

Crypto parasites are found in the gut of humans, cattle, and other animals. The Crypto oocysts (eggs) are passed in feces. Eating or drinking contaminated food or water is the most common way to get Crypto. Once the eggs are consumed, symptoms usually occur within 2 to 14 days. The symptoms may last two to four weeks.

Treatment:

- Rest and plenty of fluids are the only treatment. Previously healthy people will recover by themselves.
- Severe illness in infants, the elderly and people with weakened immune systems will require medical care.

How you can prevent Crypto from spreading:

- Do not prepare food for others when you have diarrhea.
- Practice good personal hygiene. Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds after using a toilet, changing a diaper, or handling or petting animals.
- Do not drink water taken directly from lakes, rivers, or streams.

How to destroy or remove Crypto:

1. Boil the water for at least one minute to kill the Crypto.
2. Use a filter that can remove particles smaller than one micron in size; filters that are labeled "Absolute" one micrometer filters, or those as certified by NSF International under Standard 53 for "Cyst Removal".
3. Reverse osmosis will remove the Crypto.
4. Chlorination does not destroy Crypto.

NOTE: Boiling the water or using the above methods will also prevent Giardia illness.