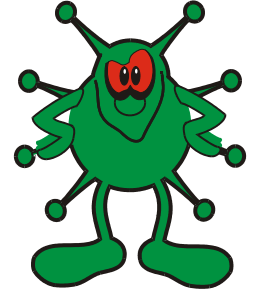




## Cryptosporidium (crip-toe-spore-rid-e-um)

### What is Cryptosporidium?

Cryptosporidium is a parasite that can cause a gastrointestinal illness called cryptosporidiosis. It occurs in the faeces of infected animals or humans, and is environmentally resistant and may survive outside the body for long periods of time.



### Symptoms

It takes between two to 12 days, usually seven days for the symptoms to develop, which include;

- diarrhoea,
- abdominal cramps,
- headaches,
- nausea,
- vomiting
- and a low-grade fever.

These symptoms can last for three weeks and may result in weight loss and dehydration

### How does Cryptosporidium spread?

There are two ways you may be infected

Firstly a person can be infected by consuming contaminated water or food. Streams or lakes may be contaminated by animal faeces and infect swimmers or hikers drinking untreated water.

Or from hand-to-mouth transfer of the parasite from human or animal faeces, to yourself or others.



### Prevention:

Scrupulous personal hygiene including thorough handwashing. *The use of liquid soaps and paper towels is advised if possible.*

### What to do if you have someone ill or infected with food poisoning in the house

Anyone suffering from SHOULD NOT prepare food for others to eat.



We would recommend that you DO NOT have friends in for meals or to stay with you whilst the infection is present.

Whilst diarrhoea persists, great care should be taken to clean the toilet including taps, door and flush handles after the patient has used it.

- Use a household disinfectant or bleach.
- Use disposable paper tissues for cleaning seat, flushing handle etc.
- Wash hands thoroughly afterwards, preferably with an antibacterial hand wash soap.

Hands should be washed thoroughly with hand soap and hot running water for at least ten seconds, to minimise the risk of cross-contamination.

Cloth towels are not recommended for cleaning or drying as they get dirty quickly and can spread bacteria from one person to another, disposable tissues/towels are recommended.



### Other Precautions

Children should stay away from school until 48 hours after **all** symptoms have ceased. Further advice in this case must be sought from the Environmental Services Department. The school should be informed of the type of illness.

### Can I Still Work?

People who work in food businesses, hospitals or nursery schools **SHOULD NOT** return to work until all symptoms have ceased. The manager of the food business should be notified of any illness you or any family member, who is ill, may have.

If people are formally excluded from work, they will not normally be required to return to work until 48 hours after **all** symptoms have ceased.

Please remember that you **may** still carry the organism for a number of weeks after the symptoms clear and scrupulous personal hygiene must be observed during this time.

**NOTE: THERE MAY BE TYPES OF FOOD POISONING WHICH WILL REQUIRE YOU TO REMAIN OFF WORK UNTIL CLEARANCE IS GIVEN BY YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER. YOU WILL BE ADVISED IF THIS IS THE CASE.**

For further information, contact your local Environmental Protection Division, telephone number 01932 838383, or in case of continuing illness, consult your family doctor.