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# Cryptosporidiosis

## (Crypto)

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### **What is cryptosporidiosis?**

- An infection caused by a parasite most often *Cryptosporidium parvum* or *hominis*.
- This infection is also known as “Crypto”.
- This parasite can live in the intestines of humans, farm and wild animals, and household pets.

### **How does a person get cryptosporidiosis?**

- Crypto is spread by:
  - drinking water or eating food contaminated with the parasite
  - contact animal or human stool
  - animals can carry this parasite even when they do not have symptoms

### **What are the signs and symptoms?**

- Some people have no symptoms.
- If symptoms occur, they will develop 2 to 10 days after a person has become infected.
- Symptoms may include:
  - watery diarrhea
  - stomach cramps
  - upset stomach
  - fever
  - weight loss.
- Symptoms can come and go and usually last 1 to 2 weeks, but rarely last longer than 30 days.
- The illness can last longer in people with severely weakened immune systems.

- Stools remain infectious for weeks after symptoms end, so do not swim in public waters for 2 weeks after diarrhea has stopped.

### **How is cryptosporidiosis treated?**

- Most people recover on their own without treatment.
- Drink plenty of fluids if diarrhea occurs.
- See your doctor, if symptoms and illness become more severe.

### **How is cryptosporidiosis prevented?**

- Always wash hands thoroughly:
  - after using the washroom
  - after diapering a child
  - before preparing or handling foods
  - before eating
  - after handling animals
  - after working in dirt in the garden or on the farm.
- Never drink untreated/unfiltered water from lakes, streams or rivers.
- Avoid swallowing water in hot tubs or while swimming in lakes, rivers and swimming pools.
- Do not consume unpasteurized milk or dairy products.
- When travelling to underdeveloped countries, avoid raw fruits, vegetables, tap water, ice made from tap water, unpasteurized dairy products, and street vendor foods.

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For more information contact your doctor, Provincial HealthLine at **811**  
or Population and Public Health at **306-655-4612**

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