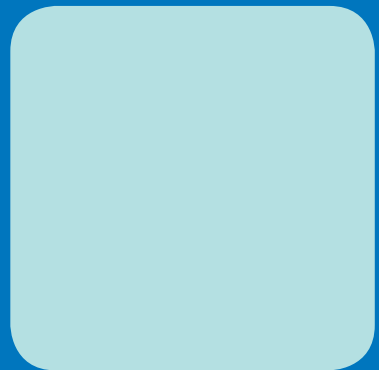
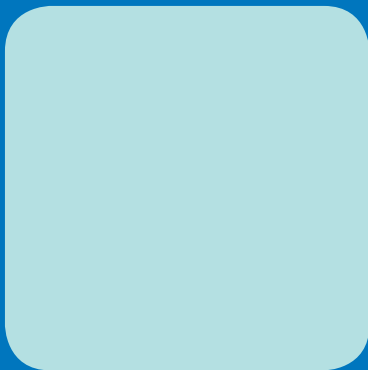


# Cryptosporidiosis



CARLISLE  
CITY COUNCIL



[www.carlisle.gov.uk](http://www.carlisle.gov.uk)

# Cryptosporidiosis



**Cryptosporidium is a parasite (a tiny organism) that causes an infection called Cryptosporidiosis affects people and cattle. Cryptosporidium is found in lakes, streams and rivers, untreated water and sometimes in swimming pools.**



## What are the symptoms and how long do they last?

Symptoms include watery diarrhoea, stomach pains, dehydration, weight loss and fever, often lasting around 10 days but can last up to three weeks. It can affect people with weak immune systems more severely & for much longer. The illness usually starts between 1 and 12 days after becoming infected. You might start to think you are getting better but then find that you get worse again before the illness eventually goes. The only way to make an accurate diagnosis is for a sample of faeces (poo) to be tested in a laboratory.

## Who is at risk?

Anyone can get Cryptosporidiosis, but it is most common in children aged between one and five years. People who care for, or work with children are more at risk than others. The illness can be more severe and prolonged in people with impaired immune systems.



## How do you catch it?

You can get Cryptosporidiosis directly from another person or animal by touching faeces, (for example when changing a nappy) and putting your hands near or in your mouth without washing them thoroughly beforehand. You can get it from infected pets or by swimming in or drinking contaminated water. Occasionally it can occur by consuming eating and drinking contaminated food, particularly unpasteurised milk, offal or undercooked meat.

## How do you avoid getting it?

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water:
  - before preparing and eating food.
  - after handling raw food.
  - after going to the toilet or changing a baby's nappy.
  - after working, feeding, grooming or playing with pets and other animals
- Do not drink untreated water.



# Cryptosporidiosis



- Do not use ice or drinking water in countries where the water supply might be unsafe.
- Always wash and/or peel fruits and vegetables before eating them.
- Do not go swimming if you have diarrhoea. If you have had Cryptosporidiosis do not go swimming until you have been clear of diarrhoea for at least two weeks.
- Avoid swallowing water in lakes and swimming pools.
- You should pay special attention to hygiene during farm visits, washing hands after any contact with animals, and eating only in designated areas.

Cryptosporidiosis is highly infectious, so you need to be scrupulously clean around your home. Clean toilet seats, flush handles, basins and taps after use. Make sure all members of your household wash their hands thoroughly with soap and hot water after going to the toilet and after handling soiled clothing or bedding.

Ensure each person affected has an individual clean towel for drying their hands. They should not use anybody else's. Ensure young children are supervised when washing hands, or have their hands washed for them.

When washing soiled linen, it should be washed separately in the washing machine using a pre-wash if possible and on the hottest temperature available.

## How do you treat Cryptosporidiosis?

There is no specific treatment for this infection. Most people with a healthy immune system will recover within one month.

It is important to drink plenty of fluids as diarrhoea or vomiting can lead to dehydration and you can lose important sugars and minerals from your body. Your doctor may recommend a re-hydration solution, available from your local pharmacist.

- If you feel sick, try taking small sips of fluid, frequently.
- Avoid tea, coffee, carbonated drinks and alcohol.
- Always dilute sugary drinks even if you would not normally dilute them.
- A simple painkiller like Paracetamol can help combat any pain.



# Cryptosporidiosis



## Do you need to stay off work, school or nursery?

Yes. While you are ill and have symptoms you are infectious. You should not return to work or school or nursery until you have been free from diarrhoea and/or vomiting for 48 hours.

You should tell your employer you have had Cryptosporidiosis if you work with vulnerable groups such as the elderly, the young, those in poor health, or if you handle food.

You should not go swimming until you have been free from diarrhoea for at least two weeks.

## Public Health England, Environmental Health Team and Cryptosporidiosis

Public Health England is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care who provide advice on controlling outbreaks of infectious diseases. Their work involves trying to identify the source of infections to prevent other people becoming infected. They also monitor outbreaks and look for patterns and trends. This work is undertaken with assistance from local Environmental Health Teams within councils. These teams are notified of infectious diseases by Pathology laboratories and contact patients to obtain as much information about their illness as possible to try to identify how the infection was acquired, offer advice and prevent the spread of illness.

If you would like further information, please contact the Food & Public Protection Team at Carlisle City Council on **01228 817329**.

CARLISLE  
CITY COUNCIL



[www.carlisle.gov.uk](http://www.carlisle.gov.uk)

Email: [environmentalhealth@carlisle.gov.uk](mailto:environmentalhealth@carlisle.gov.uk)

Telephone: **01228 817200**