

Cryptosporidiosis

Cryptosporidiosis is a type of gastroenteritis (or 'gastro') caused by a parasite called *Cryptosporidium*. Symptoms include stomach pain, feeling sick, vomiting, and foul-smelling and watery diarrhoea. Symptoms can last for up to 2 weeks. It is more common in the warmer months and is sometimes associated with swimming pools that have been contaminated by a person with the infection.

How it spreads

Cryptosporidiosis spreads through infected faeces (poo) from people or animals. You can get it from drinking or swimming in contaminated water, eating food that infected people have touched, changing the nappy of an infected child and not washing your hands properly afterwards, or touching contaminated surfaces.

Exclusion period

Exclude until there has not been any diarrhoea or vomiting for at least 24 hours.

Staff members with these symptoms should not handle food until they have not vomited or had diarrhoea for at least 48 hours (they can be assigned to other duties after at least 24 hours, or stay away from the service for at least 48 hours).

Some states and territories may have different requirements for gastroenteritis (diarrhoea or vomiting). Check if your state or territory has different requirements for gastroenteritis.

Actions for educators and other staff

Follow the exclusion period in the *Staying healthy* guidelines.

Ensure staff and children have good hand hygiene.

Ensure staff use appropriate cleaning practices, as described in the *Staying healthy* guidelines.

If you have 2 or more cases of gastroenteritis in your service, contact your local public health unit for advice. This is legally required in most states and territories (except South Australia).

Actions for parents and carers

Keep your child at home until there has been no diarrhoea for at least 24 hours and they feel well.

Give your child plenty of fluids and talk to your pharmacist about rehydration solution options.

See a doctor immediately if your child cannot keep down any fluids. Babies under 6 months should always be seen by a doctor if they have gastro.

Do not allow your child to swim in a public pool for 2 weeks after the diarrhoea has stopped.

Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly.

More information about cryptosporidiosis

See healthdirect for more information on prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cryptosporidiosis (healthdirect.gov.au/cryptosporidiosis).

To find out if a child needs medical help:

- use the online symptom checker (healthdirect.gov.au/symptom-checker)
- speak to a registered nurse by calling the 24-hour health advice hotline on 1800 022 222.