



# Giardiasis

Giardiasis is an infection of the intestines caused by a parasite.

## If you think your child has giardiasis:

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.
- Keep your child home from childcare until 24 hours after diarrhea has stopped.
- School-aged children do not need to stay home unless they are not feeling well and/or have diarrhea and need to use the bathroom frequently.
- Anyone with giardiasis should not go in lakes, pools, splash pads, water parks, or hot tubs until after diarrhea has stopped.
- For more information, call Hennepin County Epidemiology at 612-543-5230 or your local health department.

## Parent/Guardian information

### Symptoms

Your child may have gas, stomach cramps, bloating, and diarrhea. They may not be hungry and may lose weight. Illness usually lasts between 2 and 6 weeks.

If your child is infected, it may take 1 to 2 weeks for symptoms to start.

### Spread

- By eating food or beverages contaminated with stool.
- By touching hands, objects, or surfaces contaminated with stool.

### Contagious period

The illness can spread as long as *Giardia* parasites are in the stool. This could be several weeks or months.

### Call your health care provider

- If anyone in your home has symptoms. There is a medical test to detect the parasite.
- Treatment is available.

### Prevention

- Wash hands after using the toilet and changing diapers. Wash hands before preparing or eating food. Your child may need help with handwashing.

## Giardia

- Clean and disinfect any objects that come in contact with stool This includes toilets, potty chairs, sinks, toys, and diaper changing areas. Use a product that kills germs.
- Avoid swallowing water when in lakes, pools, splash pads, water parks, or hot tubs.

For more information, call Hennepin County-Epidemiology at 612-543-5230 or call your local health department.

Hennepin County Public Health  
Epidemiology  
612-543-5230  
[epi-envhlth@hennepin.us](mailto:epi-envhlth@hennepin.us)

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