

## CAN I PREVENT INFECTION?

Yes, by washing and drying hands regularly and thoroughly before eating or preparing meals and after using the toilet. It is also important to wash your hands after changing nappies.



Cryptosporidia can come from cattle so visits to farms and handling pets must be followed by proper handwashing.

Also, avoid swallowing water when doing water sports and avoid drinking untreated water. When travelling abroad it is important to remember water may not be clean in countries with poor sanitation.

## DO I GO TO WORK OR SCHOOL?

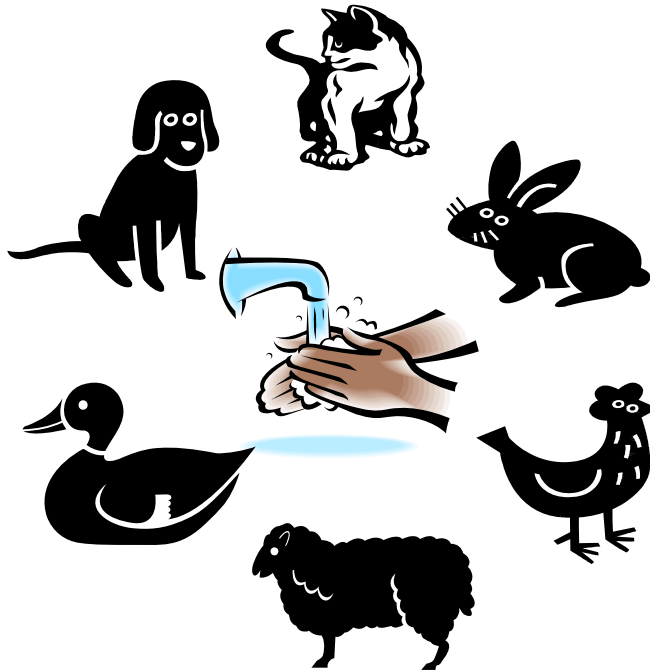
It is recommended that everyone with diarrhoea and/or vomiting should stay off work or school until symptom free, for 48 hours at least. Children under 5 years of age should not attend school/nursery or childminders for at least 48 hours after diarrhoea has stopped. The final decision regarding your child's return is with the manager of the premises your child attends.

Always ensure strict hygiene standards are maintained as already mentioned.

Strict attention to hygiene will prevent the spread of infections in schools and in the workplace.

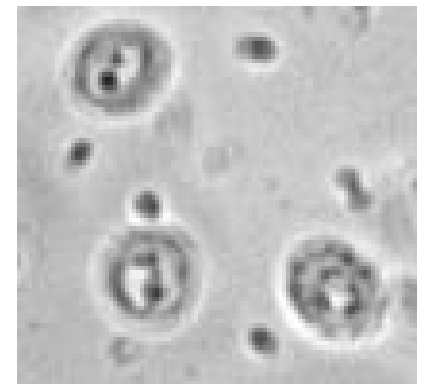
For further information contact:

Your family doctor, health visitor or Food and Health Service, Leeds City Council.



**Leeds Health Protection Team**

## ADVICE ABOUT CRYPTOSPORIDIA



Produced by Leeds Health Protection Team

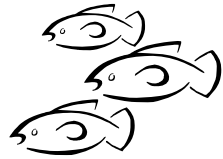
Leeds HPA Laboratory, Bridle Path, York Road, Leeds LS15 7TR

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# CRYPTOSPORIDIA

## WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

Cryptosporidia is a germ found in man and many domestic pets, also in birds, fish and reptiles.



It can also be found in untreated water such as rivers and lakes, in this country as well as abroad.



## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

The germ commonly affects children. It is not usually serious and is self limiting, usually lasting from 3 to 14 days. Symptoms may include profuse watery and offensive smelling diarrhoea, abdominal pain, vomiting, fever and weight loss which usually starts about one week after swallowing the germ.

## HOW DO I GET IT?

Accidental swallowing of the germ will cause the illness. Contact with farm animals pets and untreated water (swimming in lakes) may lead to infection. A parent of an infected child can catch the germ from soiled nappies and toilets unless strict hygiene standards are maintained. Recent travel abroad or, in the case of a child, the presence of other cases in the same school, nursery or day centre may lead to infection.



Some outbreaks have been associated with swimming pools caused by faecal contamination of the water. If your child has diarrhoea they should not go to the swimming pool. Cases should not use swimming pools until at least 2 weeks after first normal stool.

## CAN I PASS IT ON?

The infection appears in the stool as soon as the symptoms start and it will continue to be present for several weeks after the symptoms go. It is important to remember that the germ can survive outside the body in a moist, warm environment for two to six months.



Therefore, as well as careful hand washing and strict personal hygiene standards, ensure the toilet area is kept clean using household rubber gloves and disinfectant for this purpose on a regular basis.

## IS THERE ANY TREATMENT?

There is no specific treatment. Antibiotics are not effective. The symptoms usually persist on average for 3 to 14 days and most people get better without treatment.



Remember, diarrhoea and vomiting can cause severe dehydration so it is important to have plenty to drink to prevent this. If you feel sick try drinking through a straw, it usually helps. Appetite is a good guide to what can be eaten. Small frequent meals of bread, biscuits or rice can be helpful in getting the body back to normal.



If you have any worries contact your GP or Food and Health Service, Leeds City Council, on 0113 247 6286.