



Cryptosporidiosis

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What is Crypto?	Crypto is a diarrheal disease caused by microscopic parasites of the genus <i>Cryptosporidium</i>
What are the symptoms of Crypto?	Symptoms of Crypto include watery diarrhea, stomach cramps or pain, fever, nausea and vomiting.
How long after infection do symptoms appear?	Symptoms usually begin 2 to 12 days (average 7) after becoming infected with the parasite.
How long will symptoms last?	In persons with healthy immune systems, symptoms usually last 1 to 2 weeks. The symptoms may go in cycles in which you seem to get better for a few days, then feel worse again before the illness ends.
How is Crypto spread?	Crypto is spread the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Putting something in your mouth or swallowing something that has come into contact with the feces of a person or animal infected with <i>Cryptosporidium</i>• Swallowing water from pools, hot tubs, lakes, rivers, etc., that has been contaminated with Crypto• Eating uncooked food contaminated with Crypto. You should thoroughly wash all vegetables and fruit you plan to eat raw.• Accidentally swallowing Crypto picked up from surfaces such as bathroom fixtures or toys contaminated with feces from an infected person.
Are Missoula lakes and rivers safe to swim in?	Crypto is naturally found in rivers and lakes. When using these recreational waters, avoid swallowing lake or river water and wash your hands before eating or drinking.

<p>Are Missoula pools safe to swim in?</p>	<p>When it comes to this germ (Crypto), it's not safe for children to drink or get pool water in their mouths, even when the water is chlorinated. City and YMCA pools have increased their chlorination beyond normal levels to kill the germ more quickly if it's present. But it's a hard germ to kill. If someone infectious with crypto is in a pool today and fecal material contaminates the water and you or your child swallows some, there is a risk of infection.</p>
<p>How does Crypto get into pools?</p>	<p>Individuals who have crypto and who are swimming in a pool can cause a pool to be contaminated. Therefore, it is up to individuals to take steps to control the spread of the disease. If you have any of the symptoms of Crypto or have had them within the last two weeks, please do not go swimming.</p>
<p>What can pools do to prevent the spread of crypto?</p>	<p>Unfortunately, the Cryptosporidium parasite is not killed by chlorine in pools at normal levels (usually 1 to 3.5 parts per million). Pools use a process called shocking, or super chlorination, to kill the parasite cysts. This occurs when the pools are closed. Once the chlorine levels have returned to normal levels, the pool can be opened to the public.</p> <p>Pools also need to be vigilant for accidents that can cause the spread of crypto and other diarrheal diseases. If there has been a fecal accident, notify the pool attendant immediately.</p>
<p>We love to swim. What can I do to prevent my family from getting crypto?</p>	<p>The Health Department recommends swimmers follow these six steps to avoid the spread of any water-borne illnesses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Don't swim when you have diarrhea. 2. Don't swallow pool water. 3. Practice good hygiene. Take a shower before swimming and wash your hands after using the toilet or after changing diapers. 4. Take your child on bathroom breaks or check diapers often. 5. Change diapers in a bathroom and not at poolside. 6. Wash your child thoroughly, especially the rear end with soap and water before swimming.
<p>Can Crypto be spread through avenues other than water?</p>	<p>Yes, Crypto can be spread by an infected person during food preparation. It also can be spread in places where an infected person uses the bathroom, or through the diapers of infected children.</p>

<p>What can daycare providers do to prevent the spread of Crypto?</p>	<p>One of the main ways that Crypto can be spread from person to person is through diaper changing and poor hand washing. The Health Department recommends daycare providers exclude children from daycares until they are free of diarrhea.</p>
<p>What can be done to disinfect for Crypto?</p>	<p>Crypto is tougher to kill than most disease-causing organisms. Bleach solutions have little effect. A 3-percent concentration of hydrogen peroxide or a 1-percent concentration of ammonia seem to be the best choices for killing Crypto.</p>
<p>If someone has symptoms of Crypto how can he/she be tested to confirm the disease?</p>	<p>Visit your healthcare provider and talk to him or her about being tested for Crypto.</p>
<p>What is the treatment for Crypto?</p>	<p>The CDC recommends that the drug nitazoxanide be used for treatment of diarrhea caused by Crypto, but your healthcare provider can determine the best method of treatment. If you have diarrhea, remember to drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. Rapid loss of fluids from diarrhea may be especially dangerous for babies.</p>
<p>Where can I go for more information?</p>	<p>For more information on Crypto, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Web site or call the Health Department at 406-258-3500.</p>