Locally-acquired Cyclosporiasis in Ontario

Ontario is experiencing an increase in the number of *Cyclospora* infections. There have been 113 locally-acquired cyclosporiasis cases reported in Ontario between April 1 and August 6, 2019, with 9 reported cases in Durham Region. We request your assistance in diagnosing infected patients. Testing for *Cyclospora* will support prompt treatment to lessen the duration of symptoms as well as assist with identifying the source of illness.

- **Diagnosis:** If patients present with cyclosporiasis-compatible symptoms, submit a stool sample for ova and parasite (O&P) testing to your local laboratory or to the Public Health Ontario Laboratory using the General Test Requisition form. Please request testing for stool parasites and specify the request is to test for *Cyclospora*.

- **Treatment:** First-line treatment is trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole (TMP-SMX).

Cyclosporiasis is a gastrointestinal illness caused by infection of the parasite *Cyclospora cayetanensis*. Frequent watery diarrhea is common, however other symptoms may include anorexia, fatigue, abdominal cramps, nausea and myalgia. Untreated, symptoms can last 6 – 7 weeks and can wax and wane in intensity. Symptoms generally improve within 2 - 3 days of starting first-line treatment.

People are infected by ingesting food or water contaminated with the parasite. Travel related cases include countries in the Caribbean, South & Central Americas, South & South East Asia. Most locally-acquired outbreaks in Ontario occur in the spring and summer and are usually related to produce such as berries or herbs imported from *Cyclospora*-endemic countries. This infection is not usually spread from person to person.


Cyclosporiasis is a *disease of public health significance*. Health care providers are required to report all confirmed cases to the Durham Region Health Department, Health Protection Division at 1-888-777-9613.

Health care provider resources now available to order online durham.ca/HCP.

**Durham Region Health Department: 905-723-3818, 1-888-777-9613**  
August 13, 2019

If you prefer to receive this information in an electronic format please submit your request to healthresources@durham.ca

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-888-777-9613.