

Preventing the spread of infection

If you are diagnosed with giardiasis, it is very important that you take some precautions in order to prevent other members of your household from becoming infected. You should:

- wash your hands regularly,
- not cook or handle food that is to be eaten by other members of your household, and
- avoid sharing utensils or towels.

It is recommended that you stay away from work or college until you have been completely free from symptoms for 48 hours.

In all "suspect illness", see your own Doctor, taking this card with you

Employee's Name:

Address:

.....

.....

Occupation:

Interserve Construction Ltd

GIARDIASIS

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS TO PERSONS
WORKING WITH OR NEAR SEWAGE, SLUDGE,
RIVERS, CANALS, DITCHES, PONDS, etc

SHOW THIS CARD
TO YOUR DOCTOR

If you go to Hospital on account of
sickness, explain your occupation
to those attending you

***THIS IS FOR YOUR
OWN PROTECTION***



Giardiasis

Giardiasis is an infection of the digestive system which is caused by tiny parasites called giardia intestinalis. The most common way that a person can become infected with giardiasis is by drinking water that is contaminated with the giardia intestinalis parasite. Other methods of contracting include swallowing the parasite from the air or recreational water contaminated with *Giardia*. Recreational water includes water in fountains, lakes, rivers, or streams that can be contaminated with sewage or faeces from humans or animals.

It can also be transmitted when an infected person does not wash their hands properly after using the toilet, and handles food that is then eaten by others. Food can also be contaminated if washed with infected water.

The sewage/sludge present on water treatment sites also contains biological hazards.

The Symptoms

Diarrhoea is the main symptom of giardiasis. The symptoms of giardiasis usually begin 9-15 days after contracting a giardiasis infection. Initial symptoms can include:

- Upset stomach
- Nausea
- a low-grade fever, i.e. a temperature of 37-38°C (98.6-100.4°F).

These initial symptoms are usually followed by repeated bouts of watery, foul smelling diarrhoea.

How it spreads

When an infected person passes a stool (goes to the toilet), some of the parasites inside the intestines can be passed out of the body inside the stool. After the parasites have left the body, they form a hard, protective shell that helps to protect them from the environment. In this form, the parasite is known as a giardia cyst. Giardia cysts can survive outside the body for several months or sometimes several years.

Precautions against risk of Giardiasis

Giardiasis can often be prevented by practising good hygiene and taking some common sense precautions. The advice below explains the most effective way to prevent giardiasis.

1. Wash your hands

The most effective way to prevent giardiasis is to wash hands and forearms thoroughly regularly, particularly:

- After going to the toilet
- Before handling and eating food
- Before handling cigarettes
- Before Changing clothes
- Before and after contact and dress of open wounds

Wash with soap and water for 15-20 seconds, making sure that you clean both the front and back of your hands. Then rinse your hands and dry them with a clean towel. You should also encourage your children to wash their hands regularly

2. Wear Gloves

Try not to place your gloves into trouser or coat pockets between uses. This causes your pockets to harbour bacteria that may be on your gloves.

3. Housekeeping

Everyone is responsible for ensuring that housekeeping is at a high standard, beginning with his own working place (clean and tidy offices, desks, clean shoes/boots etc).