



HEALTH ALERT

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Cyclospora

The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) is sharing this Health Alert with information from Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) related to recent cases of domestically acquired cyclosporiasis in multiple states, including Pennsylvania.

In Pennsylvania, cases of cyclosporiasis are voluntarily reported to DOH. PA confirmed 28 cases so far in 2026; however, additional reports have been received, investigations are underway, and case counts are expected to increase in the coming days and weeks.

On July 16th the CDC reported that health officials are investigating a multistate outbreak of cyclospora linked to shredded iceberg lettuce served at Taco Bell locations in 5 states. As per CDC direction, **do not eat shredded iceberg lettuce from Taco Bell locations in Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and West Virginia.** CDC is also investigating other outbreaks and illnesses of cyclosporiasis nationally that are unrelated to this outbreak.

Though PA is not named among the 5 states for the outbreak related to iceberg lettuce at Taco Bell, ODP is sharing information for your awareness about cyclospora.

Please note that whenever diarrhea is present, it is important to maintain good hydration, which may become more challenging in times of extreme heat. Consult your health care provider with questions regarding severe or persistent symptoms.

What is Cyclospora infection?

Cyclospora infection, or cyclosporiasis, is an intestinal illness caused by the microscopic parasite Cyclospora. People get infected by eating food or drinking water that is contaminated with the parasite.

Cyclospora infection can occur throughout the year but is most frequently seen in the U.S. during the spring and summer months (May through August). Cyclospora infection is not usually life-threatening.

Who can get Cyclospora infection?

Cyclospora can infect people of any age. It is commonly associated with travel to tropical or subtropical regions of the world. In the U.S., outbreaks of cyclosporiasis have been linked to various types of fresh produce. People can get infected with Cyclospora more than once.

What are the typical symptoms of Cyclospora infection and when do they begin?

Cyclospora infects the small intestine, a part of your digestive system. Common symptoms include:

- Watery, sometimes explosive, diarrhea

- Abdominal cramping and bloating
- Nausea
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss

Symptoms usually begin about one week after exposure but can range from two days to two weeks.

How is Cyclospora infection treated?

Cyclospora infection can be treated by an antibiotic called trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole, usually for 7 to 10 days. If you have an allergy to sulfa drugs, discuss alternatives with your doctor.

Most people with healthy immune systems will recover without treatment. If not treated, however, the illness may last anywhere from a few days to a month or longer. Rest and drinking plenty of fluids is also important for those who have diarrhea.

How does Cyclospora infection spread?

Cyclospora spreads when people eat food or drink water that is contaminated with stool (poop). Infection does not usually spread directly from one person to another. Outbreaks in the U.S. have been linked to various types of fresh produce, including salad mix, berries, cilantro, basil, green onions, and snow peas.

What can be done to prevent Cyclospora infection?

Key prevention steps include:

- Wash hands with soap and water before and after handling raw fruits and vegetables
- Rinse fruits and vegetables, including herbs, under running water
- Scrub firm produce, such as melons or cucumbers, with a clean produce brush
- Cut away damaged areas on fruits and vegetables before eating
- Cook food thoroughly, which can kill Cyclospora
- Refrigerate cut, peeled, or cooked produce as soon as possible (within two hours)
- Avoid food or water that may be contaminated, especially when traveling to endemic regions

Where can I get more information about Cyclospora infection?

You can visit the following pages from the PA DOH, CDC and FDA for additional valuable information:

[Cyclospora Fact Sheet](#)

[About Cyclosporiasis | Cyclosporiasis | CDC](#)

[Preventing Cyclosporiasis | Cyclosporiasis | CDC](#)

[Cyclospora Outbreak Linked to Shredded Iceberg Lettuce Served at Taco Bell in 5 States | Cyclosporiasis | CDC](#)

[Cyclospora | FDA](#)