

Iowa Cyclospora Outbreak 2013

Outbreak Update 7.12.13

(new information is highlighted)

- IDPH, CDC, the State Hygienic Laboratory and local public health agencies are investigating an outbreak caused by *Cyclospora*.
 - *Cyclospora* is a rare parasite.
 - Previous outbreaks have been associated with fresh produce (fresh fruits and vegetables)
 - People become infected with *Cyclospora* by consuming food or water contaminated with the parasite.

- The source of this outbreak is unknown at this time, however progress is being made.
 - Cyclospora illness is typically traced to consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables contaminated with the parasite; this investigation currently indicates fresh vegetables, not fruit, may be the source of illness.
 - IDPH is working with local public health agencies to interview individuals who are ill to determine if there is a common food exposure that would indicate the source of illness.
 - Cluster investigations continue, which ask questions of both the ill person and their family and friends who are not ill, to determine what the well people did not eat.

- *Cyclospora* infection causes a watery diarrhea that lasts an average of 57 days, if untreated.
 - Most of the illnesses in this outbreak began in mid to late June. Many people report still being ill and some have had relapses.

- There is treatment (medicine) available to treat *Cyclospora* infection.
 - Specific laboratory testing (not commonly ordered) must be done to detect *Cyclospora*.
 - Specific treatment (not typically used to treat more common diarrheal illnesses) can be prescribed.

- If you are experiencing diarrhea, or have recently had a long bout with diarrhea, you should contact your health care provider and see if you should be tested for *Cyclospora* infection.
 - Additional symptoms of cyclosporiasis (the infection caused by *Cyclospora*) include:
 - Watery diarrhea
 - Fatigue (severe tiredness)
 - Loss of appetite
 - Weight loss
 - Bloating
 - Increased gas
 - Stomach cramps
 - Nausea
 - Vomiting
 - Muscle aches
 - Low-grade fever