



Erie County
Department of
Health



Public Health
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COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH

HEALTH ADVISORY #373

July 16, 2026

INCREASE IN CYCLOSPORIASIS IN U.S. AND NEW YORK STATE

Please distribute to Healthcare Providers, Hospitals, Laboratories, Emergency Rooms, Community Health Centers, College Health Centers, Community-Based Organizations, Family Planning Providers, and Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Pediatric, Adolescent Medicine, Infectious Disease, and Primary Care Providers

SUMMARY

- The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and New York City Health Department (NYC Health Department) are investigating an increase of cyclosporiasis in the state. Cyclosporiasis is an intestinal infection caused by the parasite *Cyclospora*.
 - *Cyclospora* infects the small intestine and typically causes watery diarrhea, with frequent, copious stools. The parasite is endemic in tropical and subtropical regions of the world.
 - In the United States (U.S.), *Cyclospora* infections are most common during the summer months and are usually transmitted by ingesting contaminated food or water.
- Although Erie County is not currently experiencing an increase in cases of cyclosporiasis, 129 cases of cyclosporiasis have been reported in New York State outside of New York City in 2026 as of 7/8/2026, exceeding the typical baseline of 20-55 cases by early July. In NYC, 381 cases of cyclosporiasis have been reported in 2026 to date, which is approximately a three-fold increase compared to the same period in 2025.
 - Other state health departments and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are also investigating recent increases in cases.
 - Previous U.S. outbreaks of cyclosporiasis have been linked to various types of imported fresh produce (e.g., basil, cilantro, mesclun lettuce, raspberries, and snow peas).
- Testing for *Cyclospora* may not be routinely conducted in some clinical laboratories, even when stool is tested for parasites. Similarly, some gastrointestinal polymerase chain reaction (PCR) panels do not include a target for *Cyclospora*.
 - **Therefore, when evaluating persons with symptoms consistent with cyclosporiasis, healthcare providers should specifically request testing for *Cyclospora*.**
- Healthcare providers must report cases of cyclosporiasis to the local health department where the patient resides. **Erie County residents should be reported to the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) Office of Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance at (716) 858-7697.**



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EPIDEMIOLOGY

Cyclospora is a unicellular parasite that causes an intestinal illness called cyclosporiasis. Because *Cyclospora* is a coccidian parasite, infected people shed oocysts (rather than cysts) in their feces. These oocysts must mature (sporulate) outside the host, in the environment, to become infective for someone else. The process of sporulation requires approximately 1–2 weeks in favorable environmental conditions, and consequently, *Cyclospora* is not transmitted by direct person-to-person contact. *Cyclospora* infection is transmitted by ingesting contaminated food or water, with recent outbreaks in the U.S. linked to various types of imported fresh produce.

People of all ages are at risk of infection. Travelers to countries in the tropics and subtropics may be at increased risk because cyclosporiasis is endemic in some countries. Some infected persons are asymptomatic, particularly in settings where cyclosporiasis is endemic.

Among symptomatic people, the incubation period averages ~1 week (ranges from ~2–14 or more days). *Cyclospora* infects the small intestine and typically causes watery diarrhea, with frequent, copious, stools. Other common symptoms include loss of appetite, weight loss, abdominal cramping/bloating, increased flatus, nausea, and prolonged fatigue. Vomiting, body aches, low-grade fever, and other flu-like symptoms may be noted. If untreated, the illness may last for a few days to a month or longer and may follow a remitting-relapsing course. Although cyclosporiasis usually is not life threatening, reported complications have included malabsorption, cholecystitis, and reactive arthritis. Symptomatic reinfection can occur.

Cyclospora is unlikely to be killed by routine chemical disinfection or sanitizing methods.

LABORATORY TESTING

Testing for *Cyclospora* may not be routinely conducted in some clinical laboratories, even when stool is tested for parasites. Similarly, some gastrointestinal PCR panels do not include a target for *Cyclospora*. **Therefore, when evaluating persons with symptoms consistent with cyclosporiasis, healthcare providers should specifically request testing for *Cyclospora*.** If indicated, stool specimens should also be checked for other microbes that can cause a similar illness.

TREATMENT

Many individuals who have healthy immune systems will recover from cyclosporiasis without treatment. However, if not treated, the illness may last for a few days to a month or longer, and



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symptoms may relapse. People who are in poor health or who have weakened immune systems may be at higher risk for severe or prolonged illness.

When indicated, trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole (TMP-SMX) is the treatment of choice. No highly effective alternatives have been identified yet for people who are allergic to or intolerant of TMP-SMX. Approaches to consider for such people include observation and symptomatic treatment, use of an antibiotic whose effectiveness against *Cyclospora* is based on limited data, or desensitization to TMP-SMX. The latter approach should be considered only for selected patients who require treatment, have been evaluated by an allergist, and do not have a life-threatening allergy.

REPORTING

Healthcare providers must report cases of cyclosporiasis to the local health department where the patient resides. **Erie County residents should be reported to the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) Office of Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance at (716) 858-7697.**

PREVENTION

Patients should be encouraged to always follow safe fruit and vegetable handling recommendations:

- **Wash:** Wash hands with soap and warm water before and after handling or preparing fruits and vegetables. Wash and sanitize cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops between the preparation of raw meat, poultry, and seafood products and the preparation of fruits and vegetables that will not be cooked.
- **Prepare:** Wash all fruits and vegetables thoroughly under running water before eating, cutting, or cooking. Scrub firm fruits and vegetables, such as melons and cucumbers, with a clean produce brush. Cut away any damaged or bruised areas on fruits and vegetables before preparing and eating.
- **Store:** Refrigerate cut, peeled, or cooked fruits and vegetables as soon as possible, or within 2 hours. Store fruits and vegetables away from raw meat, poultry, and seafood.
- **Cook:** Cook your food when you can. Heating food to 158°F (70°C) or higher kills *Cyclospora*.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

NYSDOH

- [New York State Department of Health: Cyclospora Infection](#)
- [New York City Health Department: Cyclospora](#)
- [NYSDOH Health Advisory: Increase in Cyclosporiasis](#)



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CDC

- [Clinical Overview of Cyclosporiasis](#)
- [Surveillance of Cyclosporiasis](#)

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

- [AAP News: Cyclosporiasis Outbreak Guidance for Clinicians and the Public](#)
- [AAP Redbook: Cyclosporiasis Outbreak](#)

Health Category Definitions:

Health Alert FLASH: conveys the highest level of importance due to a large-scale, catastrophic public health emergency; warrants immediate action or attention

Health Alert Priority: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention to a health problem or situation

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary

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The ECDOH Health Alert & Advisory System is an e-mail notification system designed to alert community partners about important health related information. You can sign up to receive alerts & advisories at <https://www3.erie.gov/health/form/health-alert-registration>.