

Cyclosporiasis

Cyclosporiasis is a Class C Disease and must be reported to the state within five business days

Cyclospora cayetanensis is a unicellular protozoan previously referred to as a cyanobacterium-like or coccidia-like body (CLB). The organism produces oocysts about twice the size of those of *Cryptosporidium parvum*.

Cyclosporiasis is a parasitic disease of public health importance, most commonly causing watery diarrhea or other symptoms associated with the organism's parasitism of the small intestine.

Cyclospora organisms are present throughout the world and are endemic in some Asian and Latin American countries. Persons traveling in developing nations may be at increased risk, but the potential for infection also exists in the United States and other developed nations. Outbreaks have been associated with contaminated food and water. Infection occurs when sporulated oocysts are ingested, which most commonly occurs when food or water contaminated with feces are consumed. Person-to-person transfer is not thought to occur due to the days-to-weeks required for oocysts to sporulate to an infectious state. Infection seems to occur most commonly in the spring and summer.

The first human cases in the U.S. were reported in 1979. Due to increased awareness of the organism and improved laboratory diagnosis, the number of reported cases increased dramatically in the 1980s. Several outbreaks within the past decade originating from contaminated raspberries, mesclun lettuce and possibly basil, have contributed to public concern.

There have been eight reported cases since 1989 in addition to five hospitalizations associated with cyclosporiasis since 1999. Despite the absence of any recent outbreaks in Louisiana, it is important to remind health care personnel of the presence of this organism and the potential for infection.