

July 17, 2017

Attention: Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Hospitals - Emergency Rooms / Infection Control / Occupational Health, Walk-In Clinics, Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, EMS, Corrections

**RE: OUTBREAK OF *CYCLOSPORA* IN ONTARIO**

As of July 11, 2017, 52 cyclosporiasis cases have been reported in Ontario since May 1. At this time, there are no confirmed cases locally.

We urge you to be vigilant and consider testing for *Cyclospora* infection if patients present with cyclosporiasis-compatible symptoms between now and the end of summer.

**What is *Cyclospora*?**

Cyclosporiasis is a gastrointestinal illness caused by an infection with the parasite *Cyclospora cayetanensis* and is most common in tropical and subtropical countries. It is transmitted by ingesting contaminated food or water. Person-to-person transmission is unlikely. In Ontario, previous clusters have been associated with the consumption of imported fresh produce. Most sporadic cases are associated with travel.

Signs and symptoms of cyclosporiasis may include frequent watery diarrhea, anorexia, fatigue, abdominal cramps, nausea, and myalgia. Left untreated, symptoms typically last 6 to 7 weeks and can wax and wane in intensity. Symptoms typically improve within 2 to 3 days of starting appropriate treatment.

**Diagnostic Testing**

*Cyclospora* infection can be diagnosed by a stool ova and parasite (O&P) examination. Please request this on the test requisition if testing for *Cyclospora*. It may be helpful on the lab requisition to also specify the request to rule out *Cyclospora*.

The PHO Laboratories test information sheet provides comprehensive information on specimen collection and submission:

[http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/ServicesAndTools/LaboratoryServices/Pages/Cyclospora\\_Faeces.aspx](http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/ServicesAndTools/LaboratoryServices/Pages/Cyclospora_Faeces.aspx)

If you have additional questions, please call the Health Unit and ask to speak with a nurse in the Communicable Disease Control, Epidemiology and Evaluation Department

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705-457-1391

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1-888-255-7839