

## Fast Facts

### Giardia

- Very common parasite that lives in the intestines of people and animals
- Encased in hard shells (cysts), which allow them to survive outside the body for months
- Once it enters a new host, the cysts dissolve, and the parasites are released
  - Typically, infection occurs by swallowing contaminated water
  - Can be found in lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams worldwide
- Also found in public water supplies, wells, cisterns, swimming pools, water parks, and spas
- Can be passed via food if a food handler has the condition and doesn't wash their hands thoroughly or if raw produce is irrigated or washed with contaminated water
- Can also be spread through person-to-person contact, such as when parents or childcare workers change a child's diaper or through anal sex
- If symptoms are present, they usually appear one to three weeks after exposure and last two to six weeks but can last longer or recur

<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
<p><i>None</i></p> <p><i>Main:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Watery, sometimes foul-smelling diarrhea that alternates with soft, greasy stools</li> </ul> <p><i>Other symptoms:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Fatigue</li> <li>-Stomach cramps/bloating</li> <li>-Gas</li> <li>-Nausea</li> <li>-Weight loss</li> </ul>	<p><i>Mild:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No treatment needed</li> </ul> <p><i>Severe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Metronidazole</li> <li>-Tinidazole</li> <li>-Nitazoxanide</li> </ul> <p><i>Prevent Dehydration/ Malnutrition:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Drink plenty of water and electrolytes</li> <li>-Eat as much healthy, nutritious food as possible</li> </ul>	<p><i>Wash hands:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Frequently and thoroughly</li> <li>-Use soap and warm water</li> <li>-For at least 20 seconds</li> <li>-Do this after going to the bathroom, changing a diaper, and before preparing/eating food</li> <li>-If soap and water aren't available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizers</li> </ul> <p><i>Drink clean water:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Purify any water from untreated shallow wells, lakes, rivers, springs, ponds, and streams</li> <li>-Do this by filtering it or boiling it for at least 10 minutes at 150°F</li> <li>-Drink bottled water when traveling to areas where poor sanitation is prevalent</li> <li>-Make sure the bottle is sealed before opening it</li> <li>-Use it to brush your teeth too</li> <li>-Don't have ice added to any of your beverages.</li> </ul> <p><i>Other tips:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Wash raw fruits and vegetables in uncontaminated water</li> <li>-Avoid eating raw fruits and vegetables when traveling</li> <li>-Peel fruit before consuming</li> </ul>

		-When swimming in pools, lakes, or streams, keep your mouth closed -If you partake in anal sex, use a condom
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