



## Giardia

Your child may have been exposed to this disease on \_\_\_\_\_.  
Date(s)

Please watch your child for symptoms through \_\_\_\_\_.  
Date

*If your child has symptoms, please contact your child's healthcare provider.*

### **If my child has this disease, when can he or she return to school or child care?**

**Children in child care, preschool, and kindergarten may NOT return to school until it has been at least 48 hours since the last time they had symptoms.**

**Children in first grade and older may return to school when they are well enough to participate in regular school activities.**

#### **Giardia is a parasite. It causes:**

- Foul-smelling diarrhea
- Loss of appetite
- Stomach cramps and gas
- Bloating

A person can have mild or no symptoms. If a person gets sick, it usually takes 3 to 10 days after he or she has been exposed, but it can take up to 25 days.

Giardia can be a serious illness for infants and young children who are at an increased risk of developing malnutrition.

#### **What can I do now?**

**Watch your child** for symptoms of this disease. Call your child's doctor or health care provider if your child is sick. Your child's doctor may prescribe medications to help your child get better more quickly. A sick person should drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.

#### **If your child gets sick, prevent others from getting ill by:**

- Use gloves and wash hands after cleaning up a sick child who has used the toilet or after changing diapers.
- Wash hands before making or eating food.
- Consider having all the members of the household get tested for giardia. It is common for some people to not have symptoms and spread it to other people.
- Clean your home using gloves and disinfect items that touch a sick person's stool by using a mixture of 3/4 cup bleach to 1 gallon of water.

#### **How is giardia spread?**

- Swimming in freshwater streams, rivers, or lakes
- Drinking water that contains the parasite, usually from freshwater streams, rivers, or lakes
- Not washing hands after toileting or changing diapers
- Touching the stool of a sick person
- Eating unsafe food that has the parasite in it