



## Prevention & Control

See ***Giardia and Pets*** (</parasites/giardia/giardia-and-pets.html>) for information on minimizing your exposure to *Giardia* if you have dogs or cats.

### Practice good hygiene.

- Everywhere
  - Wash hands with soap and clean, running water for at least 20 seconds; rub your hands together to make a lather and be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
    - Before, during, and after preparing food
    - Before eating food
    - Before and after caring for someone who is sick
    - Before and after treating a cut or wound
    - After using the toilet
    - After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
    - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
    - After touching an animal or animal waste
    - After handling pet food or pet treats
    - After touching garbage
  - Help young children and other people you are caring for with handwashing as needed.



Practicing good hygiene helps prevent the spread of disease.

### More on: Hygiene and handwashing (</handwashing>)

- At child care facilities
  - To reduce the risk of spreading the disease, children with diarrhea should be removed from child care settings until the diarrhea has stopped.
- At recreational water venues (for example, pools, beaches, fountains)
  - Protect others by not swimming if you have diarrhea (this is most important for children in diapers).
  - Shower before entering the water.

- Wash children thoroughly (especially their bottoms) with soap and water after they use the bathroom or after their diapers are changed and before they enter the water.
- Take children on frequent bathroom breaks and check their diapers often.
- Change diapers in the bathroom, not by the water.

**More on: Recreational Water Illnesses (RWIs) (</healthywater/swimming/rwi/>)**

**More on: Using chlorine to kill *Giardia* in recreational water (</healthywater/swimming/pools/chlorine-disinfection-timetable.html>)**

- Around animals
  - Minimize contact with the feces (poop) of all animals, especially young animals.
    - When cleaning up animal feces (poop), wear disposable gloves and always wash hands when finished.
  - Wash hands after any contact with animals or their living areas.



Thoroughly washing your hands after gardening can help prevent exposure to parasitic diseases.

- Outside
  - Wash hands after gardening, even if wearing gloves.

**Avoid water (drinking and recreational) that may be contaminated.**

- Do not swallow water while swimming in pools, hot tubs, interactive fountains, lakes, rivers, springs, ponds, streams or the ocean.
- Do not drink untreated water from lakes, rivers, springs, ponds, streams, or shallow wells.

- Do not drink poorly treated water or ice made from water during community outbreaks caused by contaminated drinking water.
- Do not use or drink poorly treated water or use ice when traveling in countries where the water supply might be unsafe.
- If the safety of drinking water is in doubt (for example, during or after an outbreak, in a place with poor sanitation or lack of water treatment systems), do one of the following:
  - Drink bottled water.
  - Disinfect tap water by heating it to a rolling boil for 1 minute.
  - Use a filter that has been tested and rated by National Safety Foundation (NSF) Standard 53 or NSF Standard 58 for cyst and oocyst reduction; filtered tap water will need additional treatment to kill or weaken bacteria and viruses.

**More on: Water Filters** ([/parasites/crypto/gen\\_info/filters.html](/parasites/crypto/gen_info/filters.html))

**More on: Choosing Safe Bottled Water** ([/parasites/crypto/gen\\_info/bottled.html](/parasites/crypto/gen_info/bottled.html))

Avoid eating food that may be contaminated.

- Use safe, uncontaminated water to wash all food that is to be eaten raw.
- After washing vegetables and fruit in safe, uncontaminated water, peel them if you plan to eat them raw.
- Avoid eating raw or uncooked foods when traveling in countries with poor food and water treatment.

**More on: Preventing Illness While Traveling**

(<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/content/safe-food-water.aspx>)

Prevent contact and contamination with feces (poop) during sex.

- Use a barrier during oral-anal sex.
- Wash hands right after handling a condom used during anal sex and after touching the anus or rectal area.

**More on: Safe Sex Practices** (</std/treatment/2006/clinical.htm#clinical2>)

Clean up after ill pets and people.




*Giardia* is hard to completely eliminate from the environment, but you can decrease the risk of human infection or of your dog's or cat's reinfection if it has been ill. The risk of acquiring *Giardia* infection from your dog or cat is small, but there are some steps you can take to minimize your exposure.

Clean and disinfect your home in this way:

- **Hard surfaces** (for example: cement and tile floors, pet crates, tables, trash cans, etc.)
  - **Cleaning**
    - Wear gloves.
    - Remove feces and discard in a plastic bag.
    - Clean and scrub surfaces using soap. Rinse surface thoroughly until no obvious visible contamination is present.
  - **Disinfection**
    - Wear gloves.
    - Disinfect according to manufacturer guidelines using **one** of the following:
      - Quaternary ammonium compound products (QATS)<sup>[1 (/parasites/giardia/giardia-and-pets.html#one)]</sup>, which are found in some household cleaning products; the active ingredient may be listed as alkyl dimethyl ammonium chloride.
      - Bleach mixed with water (3/4 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water)<sup>[2 (/parasites/giardia/giardia-and-pets.html#two)]</sup>.
    - Follow product instructions, ensuring the product stays in contact with the surface for the recommended amount of time.
    - Rinse with clean water.
- **Carpet / Upholstered Furniture**
  - **Cleaning**
    - Wear gloves.
    - If feces are on a carpet or upholstered furniture, remove them with absorbent material (for example, double layered paper towels).
    - Place and discard the feces in a plastic bag.
    - Clean the contaminated area with regular detergent or carpet cleaning agent.
    - Allow carpet or upholstered furniture to fully dry.
  - **Disinfection**
    - Wear gloves.
    - Steam clean the area at 158°F for 5 minutes or 212°F for 1 minute.
    - QATS are found in some carpet cleaning products and can also be used after cleaning to disinfect. Read the product labels for specifications, and follow all instructions.
- **Other items (toys, clothing, pet bed, etc.)**
  - Household items should be cleaned and disinfected daily while a dog or cat is being treated for *Giardia* infection.
  - **Dishwasher**
    - Dishwasher-safe toys and water and food bowls can be disinfected in a dishwasher that has a dry cycle or a final rinse that exceeds **one** of the following:
      - 113°F for 20 minutes
      - 122°F for 5 minutes
      - 162°F for 1 minute
      - If a dishwasher is not available, submerge dishwasher-safe items in boiling water for at least 1 minute (at elevations above 6,500 feet, boil for 3 minutes).
  - **Washer and Dryer**
    - Clothing, some pet items (for example, bedding and cloth toys) and linens (sheets and towels) can be washed in the washing machine and then heat-dried on the highest heat setting for 30 minutes.
    - If a clothes dryer is not available, allow clothes to thoroughly air dry under direct sunlight.

**More on: Giardia and Pets** (</parasites/giardia/giardia-and-pets.html>)

## References

1. Tangtrongsup S, Scorza V. Update on the Diagnosis and Management of Giardia spp Infections in Dogs and Cats.  [PDF - 8 pages] (<http://actualidadveterinaria.files.wordpress.com/2011/08/update-on-the-diagnosis-and-management-of-giardia-spp-infections-in-dogs-and-cats.pdf>)   
(<http://www.cdc.gov/Other/disclaimer.html>) Top Companion Anim Med. 2010;25(3):155-62.
2. Erickson MC, Ortega YR. Inactivation of protozoan parasites in food, water, and environmental systems. (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17133829>)  (<http://www.cdc.gov/Other/disclaimer.html>) J Food Prot. 2006;69:2786-808.

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