



STATE OF MICHIGAN

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## **Outbreak of cyclosporiasis occurring in Michigan**

*No cause identified for illnesses at this time; state offers prevention tips*

LANSING, Mich. - The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), in partnership with several local health departments, are actively investigating a large and growing outbreak of cyclosporiasis, a diarrheal illness.

As of Tuesday, June 30, more than 170 cases have been reported in Monroe, Lenawee, Washtenaw, Wayne, Livingston, Shiawassee and Jackson counties in the past nine days. Typically, Michigan only identifies around 50 cyclosporiasis cases per year.

“Outbreaks of cyclosporiasis have been occurring across the United States and now here in Michigan,” said Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, chief medical executive. “Based on the unusual number of cases we have identified in a little over a week, we anticipate additional cases of illness being reported. We recommend Michiganders contact their health care provider if they experience sudden, ongoing diarrhea and reach out to their local health department if additional members of their family are suffering from the same symptoms.”

Cyclosporiasis is caused by infection with the parasite *Cyclospora cayatenensis*, which is commonly found in developing countries and spread by food or water contaminated with feces. In recent years, outbreaks have occurred in the U.S. as a result of eating contaminated fresh produce, especially during the summer months. Cyclosporiasis is not known to spread from person to person. Symptoms occur two to 14 days after exposure and may include:

- Frequent watery diarrhea.
- Loss of appetite and weight.
- Abdominal cramps and bloating.
- Nausea (vomiting is less common).
- Low-grade fever.

Individuals experiencing sudden gastrointestinal illness are encouraged to be evaluated by a health care provider. Symptoms of cyclosporiasis can be significantly improved

with antibiotic treatment. If untreated, the illness may last for a few days to a month or longer. Providers are urged to consider cyclosporiasis among patients presenting with acute gastrointestinal illness in southeast Michigan.

“MDARD is committed to ensuring food safety across the state and is working in partnership with local health departments to identify the source of the outbreak and keep consumers safe,” said Jennifer Bonsky, Director of the Human Food Division at MDARD. “In these moments, it becomes even more important to follow all of the essential food preparation guidelines, such as washing your hands before and after preparing food and washing produce before it is consumed.”

To help avoid any illness from cyclospora or other harmful bacteria or organisms, MDARD recommends the following:

- Wash all fruits and vegetables thoroughly under running water before eating, cutting or cooking.
- Scrub firm fruits and vegetables, such as melons and cucumbers, with a clean produce brush.
- Cut away any damaged or bruised areas on fruits and vegetables before preparing and eating.
- Refrigerate cut, peeled or cooked fruits and vegetables as soon as possible.

Not all cases identified in the last nine days may be connected to the outbreak and the public health investigation is ongoing. State and local officials are interviewing cases to try and identify a common exposure and prevent additional illness. Individuals diagnosed with cyclosporiasis are encouraged to talk to health department staff investigating these illnesses to help identify a potential cause. Additional information is available at [About Cyclosporiasis | Cyclosporiasis | CDC](#).

Current case county by county as of Tuesday, June 30:

- Monroe: 70
- Lenawee: 33
- Washtenaw: 21
- Wayne: 12
- Jackson: 7
- Shiawassee: 7
- 24 cases in 11 other counties and the City of Detroit.

Age

- Age range: 8 years to 84 years
- Average age: 44.3 years
- Median age: 41 years

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