



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE  
Thomas Farley, MD MPH  
*Commissioner*

## 2013 ALERT # 27 Nationwide Outbreak of Cyclosporiasis

**Please Share this Alert with All Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Infection Control, Laboratory Medicine, Pediatrics, Primary Care, HIV Specialists, Infectious Disease, and Internal Medicine Staff in Your Facility**

- CDC is investigating a nationwide outbreak of *Cyclospora* infection
- To date, 5 cases have been identified in New York City and 372 nationally
- When evaluating patients with unexplained diarrhea for more than 5 days, consider *Cyclospora* and specifically request testing for *Cyclospora* when submitting stool specimens

July 31, 2013

Dear Providers,

The New York City Department of Health is coordinating with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on a multistate outbreak of cyclosporiasis. As of July 30<sup>th</sup>, CDC has been notified of 372 cases from 15 states. Most cases have had onset dates between mid-June through early July. Investigations performed in Nebraska and Iowa have linked infections to a salad mix. It is not clear that all cases are related to this outbreak.

*Cyclospora* is a coccidian parasite that causes watery diarrhea, nausea, loss of appetite, abdominal cramping, and fatigue. Untreated, diarrhea and other symptoms may persist for weeks. Diarrhea may become intermittent and other symptoms may predominate. People become infected by ingesting contaminated food. Direct person-to-person transmission is unlikely. If patients present to you with persistent watery diarrhea (more than 5 days) and/or abdominal cramping, nausea, anorexia, or fatigue please consider *Cyclospora* as a possible cause. Routine ova and parasite examination may not include a test for *Cyclospora*. Laboratory diagnosis of *Cyclospora* requires a modified acid fast stain. **Most laboratories require that a physician specifically request testing for *Cyclospora* when submitting stool for laboratory diagnosis.**

Report all cases to the Health Department. To report a suspect or confirmed case, consult on prophylaxis, or obtain additional information, call 866-692-3641. Providers can also report via fax (347-396-2632) or internet. Instructions and forms are available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/hcp/hcp-urf.shtml>.

Additional information on this outbreak can be found at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Website at <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/cyclosporiasis/outbreaks/investigation-2013.html>.

Sincerely,

*Sharon Balter*

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