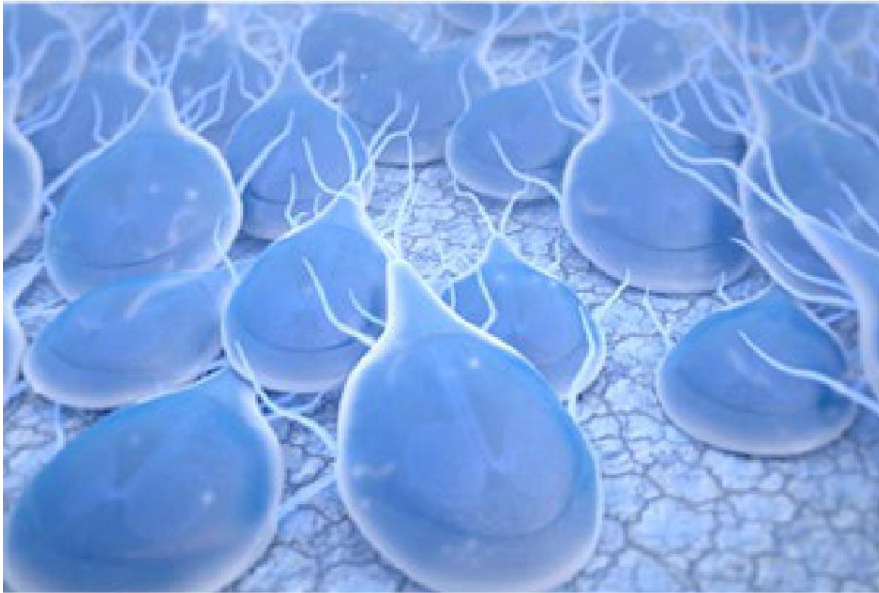




Giardia Infection (Giardiasis)



Overview

This is an illness of your intestines. It's caused by a tiny parasite that lives in water. The parasite is found all over the world. It's the most common cause of intestinal infection.

Causes

How do you get infected? It happens when you swallow the giardia parasite. Giardia can live in lakes, streams, swimming pools and spas. It can live in public water supplies, especially in places that don't have good sanitation. You can get it from contaminated ice, or by eating uncooked food washed in contaminated water. Giardia also spreads through poop. If you touch a surface with infected poop on it, you can spread it to your mouth and swallow it.

Symptoms

What are the symptoms of infection? You may have an upset stomach and nausea. You may have cramps, gas and bloating. You may feel tired and dehydrated. You may have diarrhea, and your poop may be soft and greasy. You may lose weight.

Treatment

How do we treat an infection? Most people who have giardia get better on their own in a few weeks. But for some, symptoms last longer. Your doctor may give you an antibiotic or other medications to help you get better. For more information, talk to your doctor.