

## **Cryptosporidiosis**

### **What is Cryptosporidiosis?**

Cryptosporidiosis is a illness caused by a germ called cryptosporidium. The germ causes an infection to the bowel.

### **What are the Symptoms?**

The illness may start between 1 to 12 days of becoming infected with the germs. The symptoms for Cryptosporidiosis are the following: -

- Diarrhoea (profuse and watery)
- Stomach pains
- Flu-like Fever
- Aching muscles
- Weight loss

### **How long does it last?**

Cryptosporidiosis, for most people will last for up to 2 to 3 weeks, but for those with reduced immunity it can be extremely serious.

### **How can I catch it?**

The illness can be caught from/by the following: --

- From somebody already suffering from the illness (the illness is much easily spread in children as they are less likely to practice good hygiene).
- From farm animals (especially sheep and cows) and from pets. You must always wash your hands after handling any animal.
- From drinking unpasteurised milk (green top).
- From drinking contaminated water ( mostly water from streams, rivers, lakes etc).
- By eating undercooked meats.

### **Can I give it to someone else?**

Yes,

The germ causing the illness can be spread between people whom live or work together.

The infection appears in your faeces (stool) and can be spread by direct contact on unwashed hands.

### How is it treated?

There is no treatment specifically for Cryptosporidiosis and most recover without any form of treatment. Although its main symptoms, Diarrhoea and vomiting lead to dehydration so it is important to drink plenty.

### How can I prevent myself from catching or spreading the illness?

You can avoid spreading or catching the illness by: -

- regularly washing your hands (especially when preparing or eating foods, changing nappies, using the toilet or contact with animals)
- avoiding swallowing water when doing water sports,
- not drinking untreated water.(untreated water should be boiled for at least 3 minutes before drinking)
- by regular cleaning of toilet seats, handles, and taps with hot soapy water or disinfectant.
- Have individual towels.
- Wash clothes in the highest possible water.
- Do not use public swimming, plunge or spa pools whilst ill.

### When can I return to school or work?

People suffering from the illness shouldn't return to school/work for at least 48 hours after the diarrhoea has stopped.