



# Food Safety News

Yavapai County Environmental Health and  
The University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, Yavapai County



A Food Safety Partnership  
Making Yavapai County A Safer Place to Eat

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## Cyclosporiasis

During the Summer of 2013, there have been continued reports about the multi-state outbreak of cyclosporiasis. As of mid-August 2013, there had been well over 500 reported cases in at least 19 states. The Federal Drug Administration reported that at least some the reported cases can be traced back to a prepackaged salad mix from Mexico.

Prior to this recent outbreak, cases of cyclosporiasis were exceedingly rare in the United States (US) and were primarily found amongst people living or traveling in tropical or subtropical regions of the world. However, there has been an increasing number of reported cases in the US since the mid-1990s linked to various types of imported fresh produce, including raspberries, basil, snow peas, and mesclun lettuce.

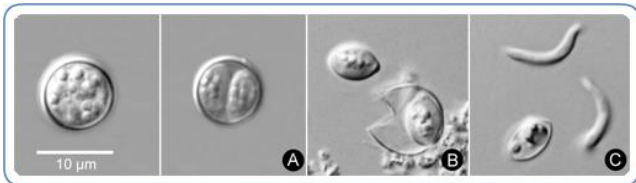


Image: Stages of *Cyclospora cayetanensis* oocysts

### What is cyclosporiasis?

Cyclosporiasis is caused by an intestinal infection of a parasite called *Cyclospora cayetanensis* (SIGH-clo-SPOR-uh KYE-uh-tuh-NEN-sis). This parasite is composed of one cell and is too small to be seen without a microscope.

### How do people get cyclosporiasis?

Consuming food or water contaminated with *Cyclospora cayetanensis* oocysts (the infective stage of the organism); or putting anything into your mouth that has touched the stool of a person or animal with cyclosporiasis.

### Symptoms of cyclosporiasis

Symptoms include diarrhea, loss of appetite, bloating, stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting, muscle aches, low-grade fever, and fatigue. Symptoms typically appear about 1 week after ingestion. If untreated, the symptoms may last a week to more than a month. Symptoms may return.

### Who is at risk for contracting cyclosporiasis?

Persons of all ages are at risk for infection, but young children, pregnant women, older adults, and persons with weakened immune systems may have more severe reactions.

### How to prevent cyclosporiasis

Very little is known about *Cyclospora cayetanensis*. Based on currently available information, treatment with chlorine or iodine is unlikely to kill *Cyclospora cayetanensis* oocysts. Avoiding food or water that may have been contaminated with feces is the best way to prevent cyclosporiasis and as always continuing to follow standard food safety procedures such as ensuring proper hand washing and washing, peeling, or cooking raw fruits and vegetables before serving.

#### References:

1. CDC. Parasites A-Z Index. "Cyclosporiasis (Cyclospora Infection)."
2. FDA. Bad Bug Book, Foodborne Pathogenic Microorganisms and Natural Toxins. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. "*Cyclospora cayetanensis*." 2012.
3. USDA. FSIS. Food Safety Education, Food Safety Fact Sheets. "Parasites and Foodborne Illness."

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### Upcoming Food Safety Manager Classes

English Classes in Prescott: Oct 7, Nov 4, and Dec 2  
English Classes in Cottonwood: Sept 11, and Nov 13

Call 928-445-6590 x221 to register or download the registration form from our Web site at:

<http://extension.arizona.edu/yavapai>