

WHAT IS GIARDIA LAMBLIA?



Giardia lamblia is a form of gastro-enteritis caused by a protozoan parasite which sometimes lives in the bowel of humans and animals.

How did I get it ?

From any of the following sources:

- From drinking water which has been contaminated by the organism.
- From close contact with another infected person.
- From eating food which has been contaminated with the organism.

When did I get it ?

The illness usually occurs within 5 to 10 days of infection but it can be up to 25 days before the symptoms appear.

What are the signs and symptoms ?

- Diarrhoea - which may last a week or two
- Abdominal pain
- Bloating
- Fatigue
- Weight loss

How do I stop it spreading ?

- Wash hands thoroughly after going to the toilet and before preparing meals or eating.
- Avoid drinking any possible contaminated water supply.
- Young children with the infection should have their hands washed for them or be supervised.
- Disinfect all areas in the toilet daily (including door handles).
- Infected persons should stay away from work until vomiting and diarrhoea have ceased.
- If the infected person is a food handler, works as a health carer / nurse or is a child attending school or a nursery etc. further advice should be obtained.
- Read the accompanying leaflet for further guidance.

Where can I get more advice ?

- Your own General Medical Practitioner or a health specialist will be able to advise upon individual patient health care.
- You should inform your place of work or in the case of children, the head teacher of the school to find out if exclusion is necessary and when you can return.
- The investigating officer will also provide you with a more general leaflet on infection control and may be contacted on the number below for further advice if it is required.



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