

Date: 20 July 2017
To: Health Care Providers
From: Alvaro Garza, MD, MPH, Health Officer

Please distribute to all providers and relevant medical staff in your office.

Health Advisory

Cryptosporidiosis in San Joaquin County

Situation:

San Joaquin County Public Health Services (PHS) is investigating a cluster of patients with cryptosporidiosis (crypto); all cases are less than 14 years of age and are residents of Stockton. Five laboratory confirmed cases have been reported to PHS in the past two weeks. In the past five years San Joaquin County has experienced an average of approximately one case per year, making this increase in reported cases of particular concern. A common cause among the recently reported cases has yet to be identified.

ACTIONS REQUESTED OF CLINICIANS:

Suspect crypto if a patient presents with watery diarrhea, stomach cramps or pain, vomiting, dehydration, fever, nausea, and weight loss.

Test: crypto is not seen in routine stool testing; inform the lab that *cryptosporidium* is suspected so special testing for O&P (ova and parasites) is ordered and done.

Treat: see CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/crypto/treatment.html>

Prevent: advise patients not to use recreational waters or public swimming pools until two weeks following resolution of symptoms. Food handlers, patient care providers, and children in child care should be excluded until 48 hours after symptoms resolve.

Report suspected cases by calling the PHS Communicable Disease Program at (209) 468-3822 during business hours Monday through Friday.

Background:

Crypto is a diarrheal disease caused by a microscopic parasite called *Cryptosporidium*. The parasite lives in the intestine of infected humans and animals. Chlorination and other methods of water purification will not kill *Cryptosporidium*, making it one of the most common causes of waterborne disease (recreational and drinking water) in the U.S. Crypto has also been responsible for outbreaks in child-care settings, food-borne illness outbreaks associated with contaminated foods or ill food-handlers, and through contact with livestock or animals at petting zoos. Crypto may be found in soil, food, water, or surfaces that have been contaminated with the feces from infected humans or animals. Symptoms of crypto infection can begin two to ten days after becoming infected with the parasite; watery diarrhea is the most common symptom.

Additional Information:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/crypto/index.html>

CA Department of Public Health: <https://archive.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Cryptosporidiosis.aspx>
Public Health Services Communicable Disease Program at (209) 468-3822.