

Health **FAX**

Enhanced Surveillance: Cyclosporiasis

Attention: **Physicians, Walk-In Clinics, Emergency Departments, Infection Control Practitioners, Nurse Practitioners**
Date: July 15, 2011

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit would like to inform you of an increase in Cyclosporiasis cases in Ontario. Since June 19, there have been thirteen lab-confirmed cases in Ontario with two cases reported to the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. It appears that all cases in Ontario are non-travel related. Preliminary evidence implicates fresh fruit, vegetables and/or herbs at this early stage of investigation. Due to the potential for prolonged illness related to Cyclosporiasis, SMDHU is asking all healthcare providers to be **alert for cases presenting with symptoms of Cyclosporiasis in the community.**

Cyclospora cayetanensis is a parasite infecting the upper small bowel. Infected individuals commonly present with profuse watery diarrhea and one or more of the following symptoms: nausea, vomiting, anorexia, substantial weight loss, abdominal cramps, bloating/flatulence, headache, dehydration and prolonged fatigue. This organism is not endemic to Canada. Historically, individuals have either acquired the illness through travel to developing countries or from ingesting contaminated produce imported from endemic areas. Historically, outbreaks have been linked to fresh berries and herbs imported from Central and South America.

Cyclospora oocysts in freshly excreted stool are **not infectious**. They require days to weeks outside the host to sporulate within the environment to become infectious. Therefore, person-to-person transmission is unlikely.

Laboratory Testing

SMDHU is encouraging physicians to submit stool samples in SAF fixative for symptomatic individuals.

Note: Specimens submitted for testing for ova and parasites usually are not examined for Cyclospora unless specifically requested.

Cyclosporiasis is a reportable disease. If you suspect a case of Cyclosporiasis or have questions regarding proper specimen collection, please contact the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit Communicable Disease Team at (705) 721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 Ext. 8809.

The MOHLTC Healthcare Providers Hotline is: 1-866-212-2272.