



2096 Red Arrow Trail
Madison, WI 53711
608-275-6740

Giardia

Communicable Disease Exposure Notice

Dear Parents:

Your child may have been exposed to the communicable disease **Giardia** in a Reach Dane/Reach Green classroom on the following date _____.

Please review the information below. If you have any questions, or if you child begins experiencing symptoms of the illness, contact your child's primary care provider or one of the agencies listed below.

Public Health – Madison & Dane County (608) 266-4821

Green County Health Department (608) 328-9390

What is giardia?

Giardiasis is an intestinal illness caused by a microscopic parasite called *Giardia lamblia*.

What are the symptoms of giardia?

Many people with giardiasis do not experience any symptoms. Those who become ill have symptoms that include mild to severe diarrhea, increased flatulence, abdominal cramps, weight loss and bloating. Fever is rarely present.

How does a person get giardia?

The giardia parasite is passed in the feces of an infected person or animal and may contaminate water or food. It can also be spread by direct or indirect contact with fecal material from an infected person or animal.

How long can an infected person carry giardia?

The carrier stage generally lasts from a few weeks to months. Treatment with specific antibiotics can shorten the carrier stage.

How long does it take to develop giardia following exposure?

The symptoms may appear from 3-25 days after exposure but usually within 7-10 days.



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How is giardia treated?

Giardia can be treated with prescription medications. Your health care provider can advise you on treatment options.

How long is a child with giardia excluded from childcare?

Children with active diarrhea need to be excluded from school or day care until 24 hours after the diarrhea stops.

How can I limit the spread of giardia?

All children and adults should practice good hand washing technique.