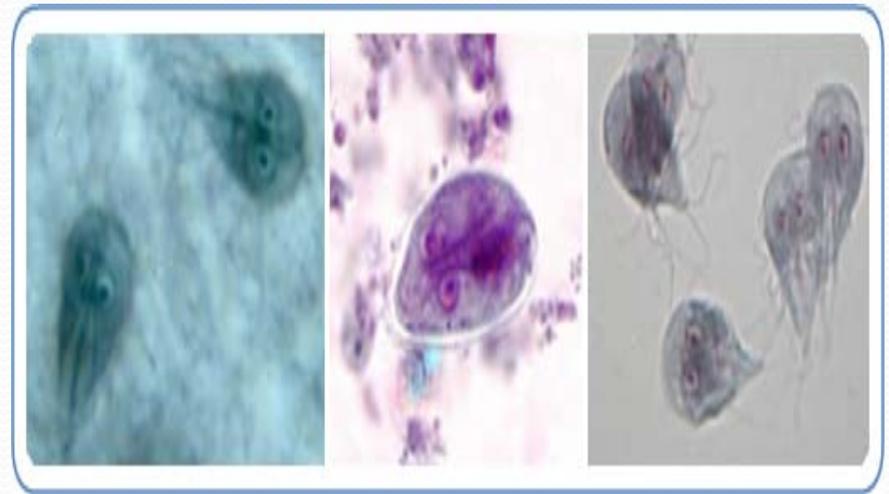


Giardia

What is Giardia?

- Giardia is a **microscopic parasite** that increases in the alimentary canal and causes the diarrheal illness known as giardiasis.
- *Giardia* is found on surfaces or in soil, food, or water that has been contaminated with feces from infected humans or animals.



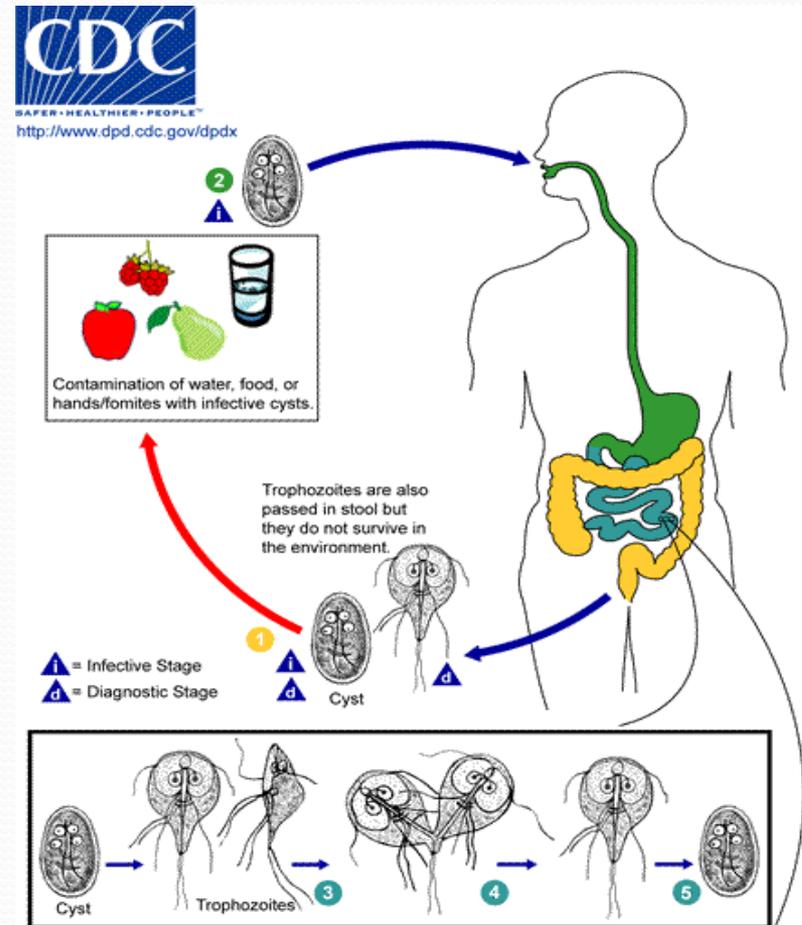
How is giardia transmitted?

- Swallowing *Giardia* picked up from surfaces that contain stool from an infected person or animal, ie: bathroom handles, changing tables, diaper pails, or toys.
- Drinking water or using ice made from water sources where *Giardia* may live - untreated or improperly treated water from lakes, streams, or wells.
- Swallowing water while swimming or playing in lakes, rivers, springs, ponds, and streams where *Giardia* may live



How do you get giardia? (cont)

- Eating uncooked food that contains *Giardia* organisms
- Having contact with someone who is ill with giardiasis
- Traveling to countries where giardiasis is common



Who is susceptible to giardiasis?

- Anyone can get giardiasis.



People more likely to become infected include:

- Children in child care settings especially diaper-aged children
- Close contacts - people living in the same household or people who care for those who are infected with giardiasis
- International travelers, backpackers, hikers, and campers who drink unsafe water
- People who swallow water while swimming and playing in recreational water where *Giardia* may live
- People exposed to human feces through sexual contact

Symptoms of giardiasis?

Symptoms of giardiasis normally begin 1 to 3 weeks after infection and last for 2 to 6 weeks or longer.

- Diarrhea
- Gas
- Greasy stools that tend to float
- Stomach or abdominal cramps
- Upset stomach or nausea/vomiting
- Dehydration



How is giardiasis diagnosed?

- Stool specimens

How can *giardiasis* be treated?

- Antiparasitic medicines- to kill the parasites causing giardiasis
- Drink extra fluids while ill



How can Giardia be prevented ?



- Practice good hygiene
- Hand washing
- Avoid water and food that may be contaminated
- Prevent contact and contamination with feces during sex

