



What Is *Giardia*?

- 🐾 *Giardia* is a parasite that lives in the intestine of people and pets.
- 🐾 It's so small you need a microscope to see it!
- 🐾 Dogs, cats and many farm animals can all have *Giardia* in their intestines. Small pets (like chinchillas) may have it too.
- 🐾 *Giardia* usually doesn't make people or pets sick, but sometimes it gives them diarrhea.



Where Does *Giardia* Come From?

- 👉 *Giardia* comes from the poop from people or pets who already have *Giardia* in their intestine.
- 👉 If the *Giardia* from the poop gets into water, it can live there for a long time.
- 👉 If the poop is outside and it gets dry and hot, then the *Giardia* dies very fast.



How Do People Get *Giardia*?

- 🐾 People usually get *Giardia* from drinking or swimming in "dirty" water that has poop in it.
- 🐾 Sometimes the water might not look or taste dirty, because it takes only a very tiny amount of poop from a person or an animal in the water to infect another person or your pet.
- 🐾 Sometimes people get *Giardia* because a tiny bit of poop gets on their hands or on their food, and then it gets in their mouth.

How Do I Know If My Pet Has *Giardia*?

- 👉 Most pets don't get sick from *Giardia*. If they do get sick they get diarrhea, just like people.
- 👉 If your pet has diarrhea, or if your pet's poop is too soft or smells really bad, tell an adult. Your pet might need to go to the vet.
- 👉 Your vet can actually look in your pet's poop with a microscope to see if there is *Giardia* in it!
- 👉 Your vet will also check your pet to make sure there isn't anything else making him or her sick. Your pet might need some medicine if he or she has *Giardia*.

Can I Get *Giardia* From My Pet?

Probably. *Giardia* can sometimes be in the poop from pets, and from people, even if they don't look sick. But if some gets in your mouth, the *Giardia* might be able to make you sick. To make sure you don't get sick, this is what you should do:

- 👉 Always wash your hands well after you play with your pet.
- ✗ Don't touch anyone's face (including yours!) or touch any food until you've washed your hands.
- ✗ Don't touch your pet's bum, even if it looks clean.
- ✗ Don't let your pet lick your face.
- ✗ If you have a dog, don't let him eat poop off the ground or drink from puddles, ponds or lakes.

