What Is “Crypto”? 
- *Cryptosporidium*, or “Crypto” for short, is a parasite that lives in the intestine of people and pets. 
- It’s so small you need a microscope to see it! 
- *Crypto* is very common in baby cows, which are called calves. 
- Dogs, cats and other animals can have *Crypto* in their intestine too. 
- *Crypto* sometimes makes people sick - it gives them diarrhea 😷. 
- Pets can get sick from *Crypto* too, but not very often.

Where Does *Crypto* Come From? 
- *Crypto* comes from the poop from people or pets who already have *Crypto* in their intestine. 
- If the *Crypto* from the poop gets into water, it can live there for a long time. *Crypto* can also live for months on the ground, and on almost anything inside or outside your house.

How Do People Get *Crypto*? 
- People can get *Crypto* from drinking or swimming in “dirty” water that has poop in it. 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. 
- People can also get *Crypto* when a tiny bit of poop gets on their hands or on their food, and then it gets in their mouth, especially if the poop is from a person (like a baby) or a baby cow.

How Do I Know If My Pet Has *Crypto*? 
- Most pets don’t get sick from *Crypto*. 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 *Crypto* in it! 
- Your vet will also check your pet to make sure there isn’t anything else making him or her sick. If your pet just has *Crypto*, he or she will probably get better after a few days.

Can I Get *Crypto* From My Pet? 
*Maybe.* *Crypto* 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 *Crypto* 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. 
- Don’t let your dog eat poop off the ground or drink from puddles, ponds or lakes. 
- If you go to a farm or petting zoo, ask your parents before you touch any baby cows.