



News release

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Hastings Family Care has seen three confirmed cases of cyclosporiasis

HASTINGS — With cases of cyclosporiasis, an intestinal illness caused by a parasite, topping 18,000 in 45 states, local medical providers want patients to know some tips for avoiding the problem.

According to the Centers for Disease Control latest update, at least 6,707 lab-confirmed cases and 423 hospitalizations have been reported since May 1. The CDC said it is aware of more than 11,500 additional cases that are not yet laboratory confirmed or require further investigation and analysis, according to ABC News.

Providers at Hastings Family Care said three patients came to the clinic with symptoms that were definitely in line with cyclosporiasis. Testing through the Mary Lanning Healthcare Laboratory confirmed the presence of the illness.

Dr. Zach Frey, HFC provider and MLH Chief Medical Officer, said the symptoms of cyclosporiasis can vary and occur about one week after infection.

Common symptoms are severe diarrhea, loss of appetite, weight loss, cramping, bloating, increased gas, nausea and fatigue.

In the United States, outbreaks have often been linked to fresh produce — basil, cilantro, mesclun lettuce, raspberries and snow peas — and in people who have traveled to areas where it is more common.

Dr. Frey said one of the biggest prevention tips is staying up to date on food safety alerts, avoiding recalled food and following food safety rules. Washing your hands with soap and water before and after handling or preparing raw fruits and vegetables is key.

All fruits and vegetables should be washed thoroughly under running water before eating or preparing them, he said. It is important to wash produce even if it is labeled as pre-washed. However, washing alone may not completely remove Cyclospora from contaminated produce. Cut, peeled or cooked fruits and vegetables should be refrigerated within two hours of use. Proper cooking reduces the risk of many foodborne pathogens, including Cyclospora.

“Yes, the numbers of this illness continue to be up,” Frey said, “But we can all take precautions while continuing to enjoy the fresh produce we love.”