

NEW MEXICO HEALTH ALERT NETWORK (HAN) ALERT
Outbreak of Cryptosporidiosis Associated with Exposure to the State Fair

October 5, 2023

Background:

The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) is investigating a statewide outbreak of Cryptosporidiosis associated with exposure to petting zoo livestock at the New Mexico State Fair, which took place from September 7-17th, 2023. There have been 3 patients with laboratory-confirmed Cryptosporidiosis infections and an additional 15 clinically compatible cases who report exposure to the NM State Fair. Cases reside in multiple counties across the state.

Cryptosporidiosis is a diarrheal disease caused by protozoan species (most commonly *Cryptosporidium parvum* and *Cryptosporidium hominis*). The most common presenting sign is frequent, non-bloody, watery diarrhea. Other signs and symptoms include abdominal cramps, fatigue, vomiting, anorexia, and weight loss. The illness is usually self-limiting, but can be dangerous to the immunocompromised. The incubation period averages 7 days, with a range of 2-14 days.

The protozoa occur in a variety of hosts such as mammals, birds, and reptiles. Outbreaks have been associated with contamination of municipal water supplies and swimming pools, as well as interactions with livestock.

Recommendations for Clinicians:

Due to the increase in Cryptosporidiosis cases, NMDOH urges providers to consider testing for Cryptosporidiosis in patients with non-bloody, watery diarrhea, particularly those with exposure to the State Fair, or exposure to someone who attended the State Fair. Testing for Cryptosporidiosis is normally done by molecular detection using a gastrointestinal pathogen Polymerase-Chain Reaction (PCR) panel, or by identification of *Cryptosporidium* oocysts in stool specimens.

Patients with *Cryptosporidium* infection should be given instructions to refrain from swimming until two weeks after their symptoms resolve, and should not serve food or provide care to vulnerable populations while symptomatic. Children with Cryptosporidiosis should not attend daycare until their symptoms resolve.

Please call NMDOH at 505-827-0006 to report patients with *Cryptosporidiosis* or if you have any questions.

For more information on Cryptosporidiosis, please visit the NMDOH webpage or the CDC website:

<https://www.nmhealth.org/publication/view/general/5054/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/crypto/index.html>

New Mexico Health Alert Network: To register for the NM Health Alert Network, please visit the following site <https://nm.readyop.com/fs/4cjZ/10b2> Please fill out the registration form completely and click Submit at the bottom of the page, to begin receiving Important health alerts, advisories, and updates.

Please Note that our system also utilizes text messaging to notify members of important health information. Due to FCC Regulation changes that are designed to decrease the amount of unwanted spam text messages sent each year to citizens, please save, this phone number **(855) 596-1810** as the **“New Mexico Health Alert Network”** default phone number for your account used for text messages on the mobile device(s) you register with us.