

Cryptosporidiosis

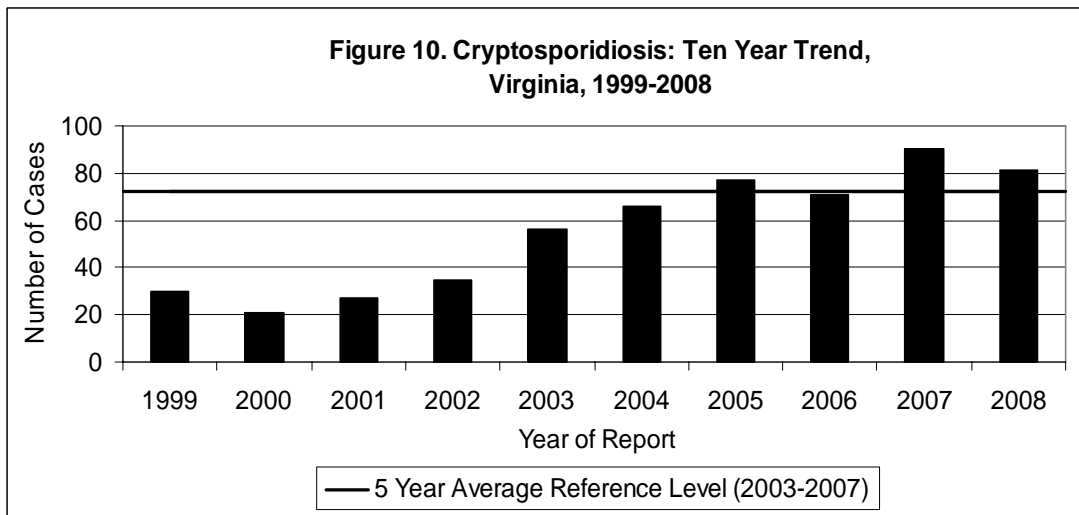
Agent: *Cryptosporidium parvum* (parasite)

Mode of Transmission: Occurs via the fecal-oral route and can include person-to-person, animal-to-person, foodborne and waterborne transmission. *Cryptosporidium* oocysts can remain infectious for 2-6 months after being excreted from infected individuals. The oocysts are very resistant to chemicals used to purify drinking water.

Signs/Symptoms: Profuse watery diarrhea with cramping and abdominal pain. The diarrhea may be preceded by anorexia and vomiting in children. Asymptomatic infections are common.

Prevention: Careful hand hygiene after each toilet visit and before preparing and eating food. People with diarrhea should not enter public recreational water. Do not drink water from streams, lakes, springs or any unknown source. Water purification methods, including boiling water or filtration, should be considered when drinking water from natural or unknown sources.

Eighty-one cases of cryptosporidiosis were reported in Virginia during 2008. This is a 10% decrease from the 90 cases reported in 2007 and a 12% increase from the five year average of 72 cases per year (Figure 10). The annual number of cryptosporidiosis cases increased between 2000 and 2007, with the exception of 2006.



In 2008, the highest incidence rates occurred in the 60 year and older age group (1.6 per 100,000), followed closely by the 1-9 year age group (1.5 cases per 100,000). The other age groups had rates between 0.0 and 1.0 per 100,000. Race was not reported for 35% of cases, but among those with information on race, the black and white populations had similar rates of infection (0.8 and 0.7 per 100,000, respectively). The rate of infection among females was slightly higher than that among males (1.1 compared to 0.9 per 100,000). By region, the highest rate was reported from the southwest region (1.9 per 100,000). The other regions had rates between 0.5 and 1.3 per 100,000. A seasonal trend

was observed, with 78% of the cases occurring from April through October (Figure 11). Among cases reported in 2008, one death was attributed to cryptosporidiosis in an adult male from the 60 year and older age group.

