

Cryptosporidium

Q: What is Cryptosporidium?

Cryptosporidium is a microscopic parasite that can be found in source water. It can be introduced to a water supply through the contaminated waste of mammals living near water bodies.

Q: Is Cryptosporidium in my drinking water?

Des Moines Water Works has been testing for Cryptosporidium since 1993. The treated drinking water has been tested over 100 times for Cryptosporidium, and the organism has never been detected.

Q. How does Des Moines Water Works test for Cryptosporidium?

In accordance with prescribed United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) methods, a large amount of water is collected and concentrated using a lengthy process. The sample concentrate is applied to a glass slide for viewing under a microscope.

Q: How is Cryptosporidium removed from the water source?

Des Moines Water Works employs a multi-staged system of water purification. Sedimentation, lime softening, sand filtration, and chlorination are all used to progressively remove Cryptosporidium and other microorganisms from the water.

Q: What are the health effects associated with Cryptosporidium?

Ingesting Cryptosporidium-laden raw water can cause intestinal illness. Symptoms include diarrhea, abdominal cramps, headaches, nausea, vomiting, and low-grade fever.

Q: What is being done to reduce Cryptosporidium contamination in our water source?

Des Moines Water Works actively participates in watershed projects dedicated to reducing the amount of contaminated run-off reaching our water sources. For more information on these programs, contact Des Moines Water Works at 283-8753.

For more information, call Des Moines Water Works at (515) 283-8700 or visit www.dmww.com. For additional information, call the SAFE DRINKING WATER HOTLINE: 1-800-426-4791.