

**Aliso Beach Animal Clinic**  
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## **GIARDIA**

What is it?	A protozoan parasite. (a single cell organism)
How does my pet get it?	It is passed in the feces of an infected animal and ingested by your pet. (contaminated food and water )
What are the signs of infection?	Acutely vomiting and diarrhea (sometimes with blood) Chronically malabsorption and lack of weight gain
Can my pet be totally normal and have it?	Yes, some pets are carriers of the parasite and have no clinical signs.
How common is it?	Very common in dogs and cats in North America
How is it diagnosed?	A very specific and sensitive Elisa test on a fresh stool sample.
Can I catch it from my pet?	Yes, by ingesting stool (dog licking your face?)
What are the signs if people get it?	Diarrhea and nausea (which can be mild or severe) Some people are asymptomatic
How do I decontaminate the environment?	Giardia cysts can survive for months in water and about one month at room temperature. They are sensitive to heat, sunlight and freezing. Quaternary ammonium compounds will kill them.
How is it treated in pets?	A ten day course of either metronidazole (flagyl) or fenbendazole (panacur) Bathing is advised to clean cysts off the coat that could be ingested through grooming.
How do I know if it is gone?	Rechecking the stool sample at the end of treatment