What is Giardiasis?
Giardiasis is an intestinal infection caused by the protozoan *Giardia lamblia*.

How is Giardiasis transmitted?
Giardiasis is transmitted through fecal-oral contamination. People and animals infected with *Giardia* pass it in their stool. Eating contaminated food or water may lead to infection. Rivers, lakes, ponds, or pools may harbor the protozoan. Improperly installed or maintained wells or springs may also harbor Giardia.

What are common symptoms associated with Giardia infections?
The most common symptoms of giardiasis include diarrhea, abdominal cramps, pale and greasy stools, weight loss, fatigue, and bloating. Symptoms may last for days or weeks, or may be intermittent. Symptoms usually appear one to three weeks after infection. Some people with giardiasis show no symptoms.

Will my pet develop Giardiasis?
Many animals do not show symptoms of infection. The most common symptoms in dogs and cats include weight loss, inability to gain weight, diarrhea, vomiting, lack of appetite, and greasy stools.

How is it diagnosed?
Your health care provider diagnoses Giardiasis from a stool sample.

How is it treated?
Your health care provider may prescribe antiprotozoal medication. Supportive care is also important in cases of severe diarrhea and dehydration.

How can it be prevented?
- Practice good hygiene.
- Wash hands after using the bathroom and before cooking.
- Avoid swimming in water that may be contaminated and do not swim if you have diarrhea.

Additional Information:
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Minnesota Department of Health

This fact sheet is meant to provide basic information. For specific health concerns please contact your physician or veterinarian. Updated 2005.