

## Giardiasis

*Giardiasis is a Class C Disease and must be reported to the state within five business days.*

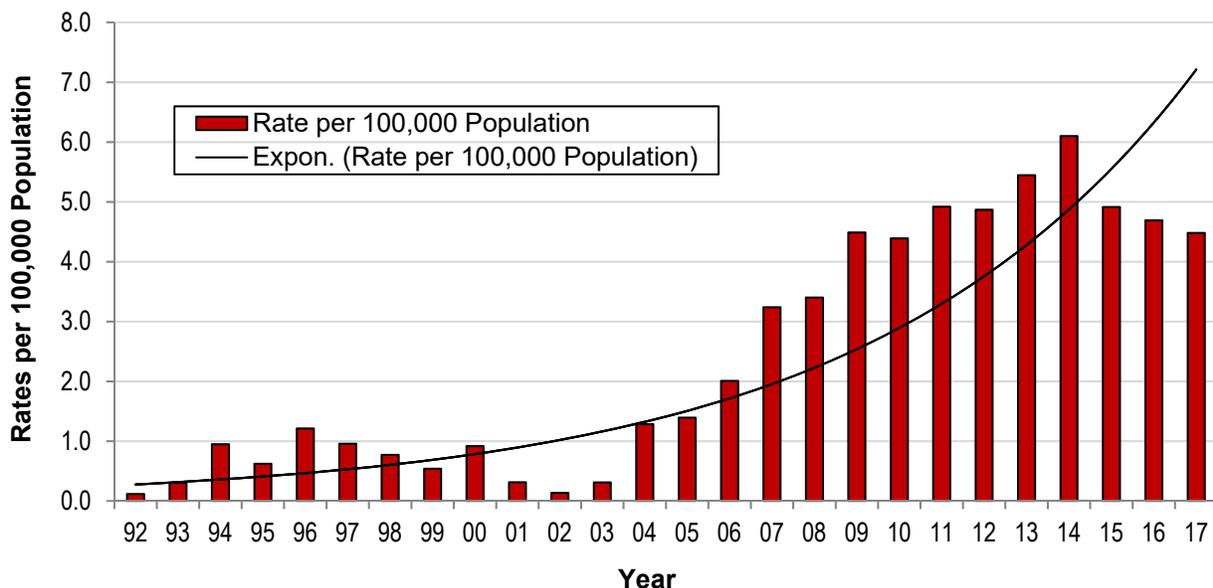
*Giardia lamblia*, also referred to as *Giardia intestinalis*, is a flagellate protozoan that infects principally the upper small intestine and is the most commonly diagnosed intestinal parasite in U.S. public health laboratories. Persons are most commonly infected by the consumption of contaminated water, but infection from consumption of contaminated food and fecal-oral (hands and fomites) transmission also occurs. Person-to-person transmission most commonly occurs in childcare centers or in institutions for the mentally disabled. Diagnosis is traditionally made by the identification of cysts, (the resistant stage responsible for infection), or trophozoites in the feces, duodenal fluid, or mucosa.

Surveys of the United States have demonstrated prevalence rates of *Giardia* organisms in stool specimens that range from 1% to 20%, depending on geographic location and age.

Although humans are the principal reservoir of infection, *Giardia* can infect dogs, cats, beavers and other animals. Semi-aquatic animals can serve as zoonotic hosts and can transfer the organism to humans through contaminated water. *Giardia* are considered resistant to chlorine and the small size of the cysts, (8-12 microns), renders some filtration systems useless.

Over the last nine years, there have been about 150 to 300 cases reported annually. The annual incidence rates in Louisiana range from 0.12 to 6.1 cases per 100,000 population (Figure 1).

**Figure 1:** Reported *Giardia* Rates - Louisiana, 1992-2017

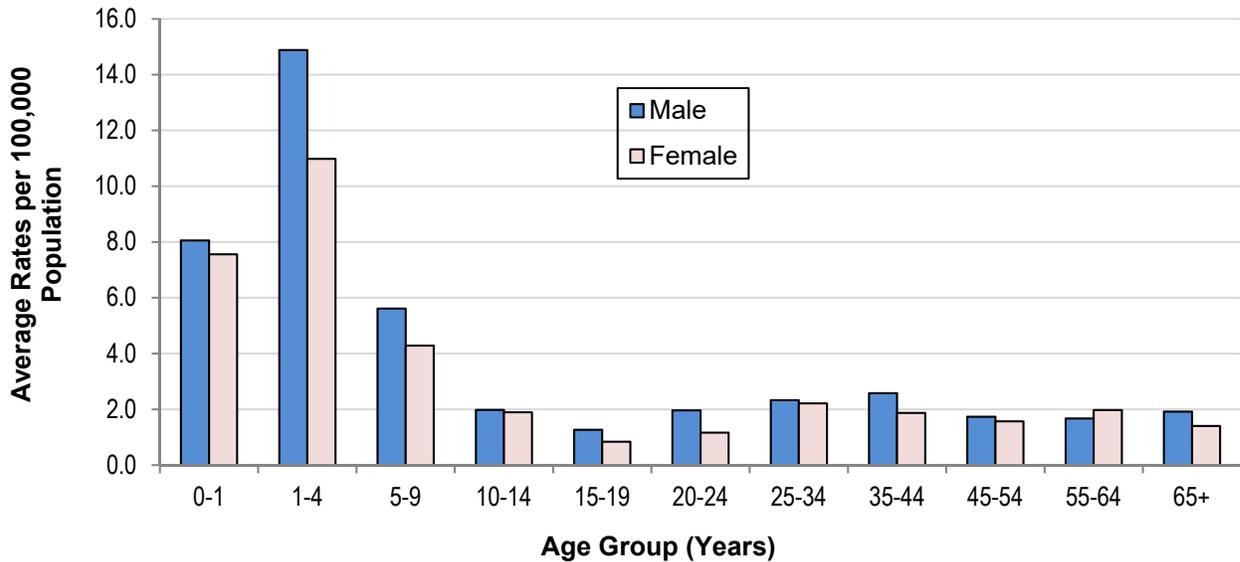


These low incidence rates are influenced by the often asymptomatic nature of the disease and under-reporting. The highest incidence rates are seen in Ascension, Livingston, West Baton Rouge, Point Coupee, St. Tammany, and Washington Parishes (Table).

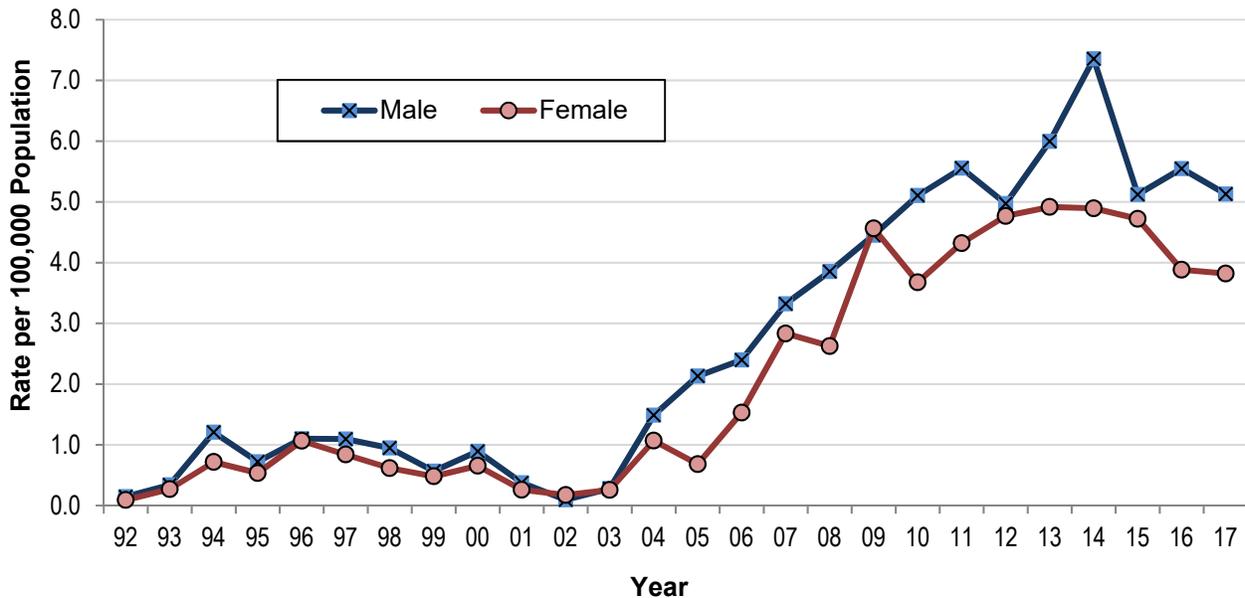
**Table:** Average Incidence by Parish - Louisiana, 1992-2017

Parish	Avg. Inc.	Parish	Avg. Inc.
Acadia	4.1	Madison	0.6
Allen	2.5	Morehouse	1.7
Ascension	8.3	Natchitoches	0.7
Assumption	2.0	Orleans	1.5
Avoyelles	1.6	Ouachita	1.7
Beauregard	1.8	Plaquemines	0.5
Bienville	0.5	Point Coupee	4.4
Bossier	1.0	Rapides	2.2
Caddo	1.5	Red River	1.2
Calcasieu	2.3	Richland	1.3
Caldwell	3.3	Sabine	1.1
Cameron	0.5	St. Bernard	1.3
Catahoula	1.4	St. Charles	1.2
Claiborne	0.4	St. Helena	2.2
Concordia	1.3	St. James	1.6
Desoto	1.3	St. John	2.6
East Baton Rouge	4.2	St. Landry	2.1
East Carroll	0.0	St. Martin	2.9
East Feliciana	2.8	St. Mary	1.2
Evangeline	2.2	St. Tammany	4.3
Franklin	2.5	Tangipahoa	4.1
Grant	2.1	Tensas	0.0
Iberia	2.4	Terrebonne	1.8
Iberville	2.9	Union	1.2
Jackson	0.7	Vermilion	3.4
Jefferson	1.1	Vernon	1.7
Jeff. Davis	3.8	Washington	4.3
La Salle	1.8	Webster	0.6
Lafayette	2.7	West Baton Rouge	5.5
Lafourche	2.4	West Carroll	0.6
Lincoln	1.2	West Feliciana	4.1
Livingston	6.2	Winn	0.5

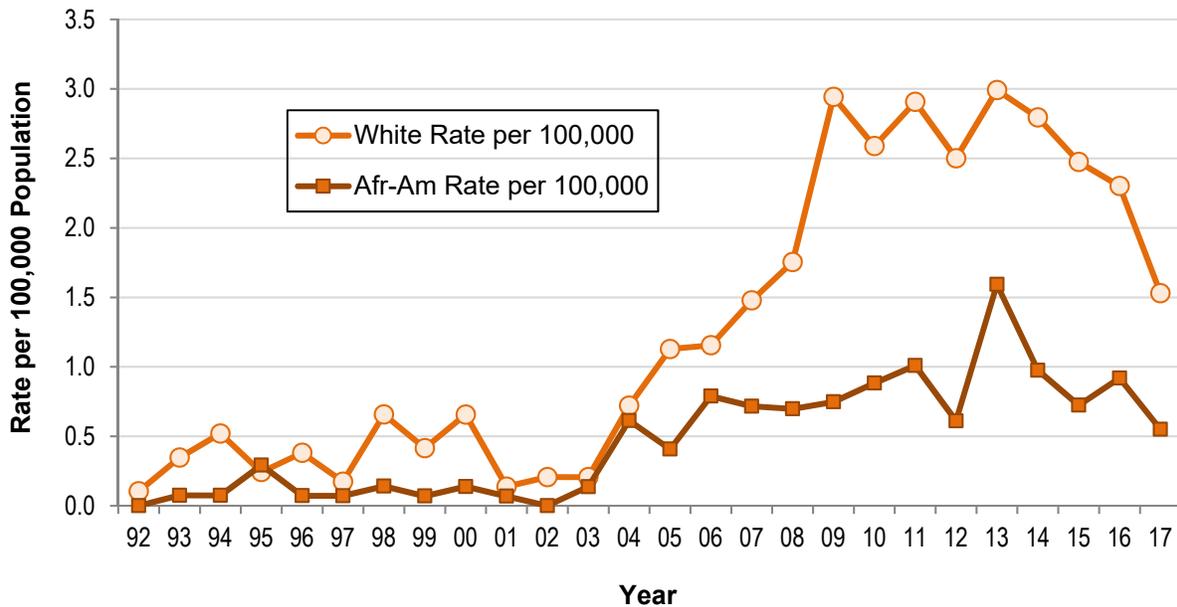
Nationally a bimodal age distribution in giardiasis rates is observed; the highest rates occur among newborns to children five years of age, followed closely by persons aged 31 to 40 years. In Louisiana, the highest incidence rates of giardiasis occur in children one to four years of age (Figure 2).

**Figure 2:** Reported Giardia Average Rates, by age group - Louisiana, 1992-2017

Females and males have exhibited similar rate trends throughout the period. The average incidence rate among men is 2.72 cases per 100,000 population, which is only slightly higher compared to the average incidence rate among women of 2.15 cases per 100,000 population (Figure 3).

**Figure 3:** Reported Giardia Cases by Gender - Louisiana, 1992-2017

Nationally, incidence rates are higher in Whites than in African-Americans; Louisiana shows the same racial distribution (Figure 4).

**Figure 4:** Reported Giardiasis Annual Incidence Rates by Race - Louisiana, 1992-2017

In the U.S., a seasonal peak in age-specific case reports coincides with the summer recreational water season and may reflect the heavy use by young children of communal swimming venues (e.g., lakes, rivers, swimming pools and water parks) (Figure 5).

**Figure 5:** Average Reported Giardiasis Cases by Month - Louisiana, 1992-2017