



Pathology Page

Cryptosporidiosis

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A 44-year-old man with AIDS experienced watery diarrhea for 2 weeks. Examination of his stool using an acid-fast stain indicated

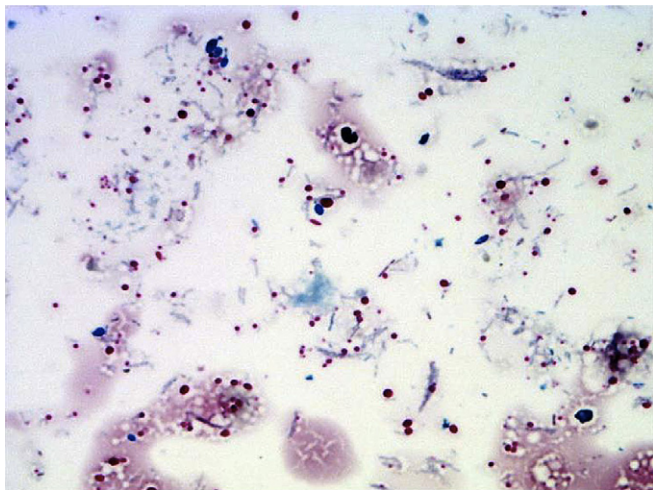


Fig. 1. Acid-fast stain showing numerous *Cryptosporidium* protozoa (100× magnification).

Cryptosporidium (Fig. 1). Cryptosporidiosis is a recently recognized enteric infection caused by *Cryptosporidium* protozoa, which cause watery diarrhea. The infection varies from a self-limiting gastrointestinal infection in immunocompetent individuals to a potentially life-threatening illness in the immunocompromised. It is acquired by ingesting *Cryptosporidium* oocysts, which are shed in the feces of infected humans and animals. In immunologically competent individuals, diarrhea resolves spontaneously. In immunocompromised patients, diarrhea can persist indefinitely and may contribute to death.

Further reading

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- [3] O'Hara SP, Chen XM. The cell biology of *cryptosporidium* infection. *Microbes Infect* 2011;13:721–30.

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