Cryptosporidium is a microscopic parasite which causes the diarrheal disease cryptosporidiosis, and is one of the most common causes of waterborne disease in the U.S. Immunocompromised persons have higher risk for more severe illnesses.

Persons at greater risk of exposure and infection include international travelers and persons who drink unfiltered, untreated water, or swimmers who drink contaminated recreational water.

A large outbreak of cryptosporidiosis occurred in North Texas in 2008, associated with recreational water sources. Other than this 2008 outbreak, the majority of case reports have been non-outbreak associated.

Greater numbers of cases tend to be reported during the summer months in Dallas.