



A Guide to Water Filters

Filtering tap water: Many but not all available home water filters remove *Cryptosporidium*. Some filter designs are more suitable for removal of *Cryptosporidium* than others. Filters that have the words "reverse osmosis" on the label protect against *Cryptosporidium*. Some other types of filters that function by micro-straining also work. Look for a filter that has a pore size of 1 micron or less. This will remove microbes 1 micron or greater in diameter (*Cryptosporidium*, *Giardia*). There are two types of these filters — "absolute 1 micron" filters and "nominal 1 micron" filters but not all filters that are supposed to remove objects 1 micron or larger from water are the same. The absolute 1 micron filter will more consistently remove *Cryptosporidium* than a nominal filter. Some nominal 1 micron filters will allow 20% to 30% of 1 micron particles (like *Cryptosporidium*) to pass through.

NSF-International (NSF) does independent testing of filters to determine if they remove *Cryptosporidium*. To find out if a particular filter is certified to remove *Cryptosporidium*, you can look for the NSF trademark plus the words "cyst reduction" or "cyst removal" on the product label information. You can also contact the NSF.

NSF International
789 N. Dixboro Road
P.O. Box 130140z
Ann Arbor, MI 48113-0140
tel: 1-800-673-6275
fax: 1-734-769-0109
email: info@nsf.org
web: www.nsf.org/certified/DWTU/

At their Web site, you can enter the model number of the unit you intend to buy to see if it is on their certified list, or you can look under the section entitled "Reduction claims for drinking water treatment units - Health Effects" and check the box in front of the words "Cyst Reduction." This will display a list of filters tested for their ability to remove *Cryptosporidium*.

Because NSF testing is expensive and voluntary, some filters that may work against *Cryptosporidium* have not been NSF-tested. If you chose to use a product not NSF-certified, select those technologies more likely to reduce *Cryptosporidium*, including filters with reverse osmosis and those that have an absolute pore size of 1 micron or smaller.

PACKAGE AND LABEL INFORMATION FOR PURCHASING WATER FILTERS	
Filters labeled only with these words may NOT be designed to remove Crypto	Water so labeled may not have been processed by a method effective against Crypto
Reverse osmosis (with or without NSF testing)	Nominal pore size of 1 micron or smaller
Absolute pore size of 1 micron or smaller (with or without NSF testing)	One micron filter
Tested and certified by NSF Standard 53 or NSF Standard 58 for cyst removal	Effective against Giardia
"Tested and certified by NSF Standard 53 or NSF Standard 58 for cyst reduction	Effective against parasites

PACKAGE AND LABEL INFORMATION FOR PURCHASING WATER FILTERS	
Filters labeled only with these words may NOT be designed to remove Crypto	Water so labeled may not have been processed by a method effective against Crypto
	Carbon filter
	Water purifier
	EPA approved <i>Caution: EPA does not approve or test filters</i>
	EPA registered <i>Caution: EPA does not register filters based on their ability to remove Cryptosporidium</i>
	Activated carbon
	Removes chlorine
	Ultraviolet light
	Pentiodide resins
	Water softener

Note: Filters collect germs from water, so someone who is not immunocompromised should change the filter cartridges. Anyone changing the cartridges should wear gloves and wash hands afterwards. Filters may not remove *Cryptosporidium* as well as boiling does because even good brands of filters may sometimes have manufacturing flaws that allow small numbers of *Cryptosporidium* to get in past the filter. Selection of NSF-Certified filters provides additional assurance against such flaws. Also, poor filter maintenance or failure to replace the filter cartridges as recommended by the manufacturer can cause a filter to fail.

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. If you have any questions about the disease described above or think that you may have a parasitic infection, consult a health care provider.

From <http://www.cdc.gov/crypto/factsheets/filters.html>



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