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# Tropical Sprue

National Cancer Institute

## Source

National Cancer Institute. *Tropical Sprue*. NCI Thesaurus. Code C45428.

A rare disorder of the digestive tract characterized by malabsorption and anemia. It is likely caused by infection leading to small intestinal mucosal injury, bacterial overgrowth and inflammatory changes. It is most prevalent in residents and visitors to tropical and subtropical climates. Clinical signs include anorexia, abdominal bloating, diarrhea and weight loss. Clinical course may progress to deficiencies of folate, vitamin B12 and iron. Prognosis is favorable with nutrient replacement and antibiotic therapy, however relapses are common.