



## *E. COLI* ENTERITIS (*E. COLI* 0157:H7)

WHAT IS ***Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*)** 0157:H7 INFECTION?

***E. coli*** ARE BACTERIA THAT NORMALLY LIVE IN THE INTESTINES OF HUMANS AND ANIMALS. ALTHOUGH MOST TYPES OF THESE BACTERIA ARE HARMLESS, SEVERAL ARE KNOWN TO CAUSE DIARRHEA. ONE PARTICULAR ***E. coli*** STRAIN CALLED 0157:H7 CAN CAUSE SEVERE DIARRHEA AND KIDNEY DAMAGE.

WHO GETS ***E. coli*** 0157:H7 INFECTION?

ANYONE OF ANY AGE CAN BECOME INFECTED WITH ***E. coli*** 0157:H7, BUT CHILDREN AND THE ELDERLY ARE MORE LIKELY TO BECOME ILL.

HOW IS ***E. coli*** 0157:H7 SPREAD?

THE BACTERIA ARE SPREAD BY EATING FOOD INFECTED WITH THE BACTERIA. THE BACTERIA LIVE IN THE INTESTINES OF SOME HEALTHY CATTLE, AND INFECTION OF THE MEAT MAY OCCUR IN THE SLAUGHTERING PROCESS. EATING MEAT THAT IS RARE OR NOT COOKED PROPERLY IS THE MOST COMMON WAY OF GETTING THE INFECTION. INFECTION CAN ALSO OCCUR AFTER EATING FOODS SUCH AS LETTUCE, ALFALFA SPROUTS, SALAMI, AND UNPASTEURIZED MILK, JUICE OR CIDER. PERSON-TO-PERSON TRANSMISSION CAN OCCUR IF INFECTED PEOPLE DO NOT WASH THEIR HANDS AFTER USING THE TOILET.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF ***E. coli*** 0157:H7 INFECTION?

PEOPLE INFECTED BY ***E. coli*** 0157:H7 CAN DEVELOP A RANGE OF SYMPTOMS THAT INCLUDE DIARRHEA, STOMACH CRAMPS, AND BLOOD IS OFTEN SEEN IN THE STOOL. USUALLY THERE IS LITTLE OR NO FEVER.

HOW SOON AFTER INFECTION DO SYMPTOMS APPEAR?

THE SYMPTOMS USUALLY APPEAR ABOUT THREE DAYS AFTER INFECTION.

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR INFECTION WITH ***E. coli*** 0157:H7?

MOST PEOPLE WILL GET WELL WITHOUT SPECIFIC TREATMENT IN FIVE TO 10 DAYS. MEDICATION SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR THE TREATMENT OF ***E. coli*** 0157:H7 INFECTION. PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH FOOD, CHILDREN IN DAYCARE AND HEALTH CARE WORKERS MUST GET THE APPROVAL OF THE LOCAL OR STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT BEFORE RETURNING TO THEIR JOBS.

WHAT COMPLICATIONS CAN RESULT FROM INFECTION WITH ***E. coli*** 0157:H7?

IN SOME PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY CHILDREN UNDER FIVE YEARS OF AGE, THE INFECTION CAN CAUSE HEMOLYTIC UREMIC SYNDROME (HUS). MOST PEOPLE WITH HUS RECOVER COMPLETELY, BUT IT CAN BE FATAL.

HOW CAN INFECTIONS WITH ***E. coli*** 0157:H7 BE PREVENTED?

COOK ALL GROUND BEEF AND HAMBURGER THOROUGHLY. MAKE SURE THE COOKED MEAT IS BROWN THROUGHOUT (NOT PINK), AND THE JUICES RUN CLEAR. DRINK ONLY PASTEURIZED MILK, JUICE OR CIDER. WASH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES THOROUGHLY, ESPECIALLY THOSE THAT WILL NOT BE COOKED. MAKE SURE INFECTED PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY CHILDREN, WASH THEIR HANDS CAREFULLY WITH SOAP AFTER USING THE TOILET TO REDUCE THE RISK OF SPREADING THE DISEASE.