



11/22/2011

***Shiga toxin-producing E. COLI***

In the past 2 weeks three cases of Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* have been reported to the Thurston County Public Health Department in children ranging in age from 5 to 14. All three cases serotyped as O157 an enterohemorrhagic strain. One case was hospitalized with Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS). PFGE patterns (DNA fingerprinting) is pending.

Interviews of ill individuals have identified common activities including the consumption of raw milk and contact with animals during the exposure period.

Outbreaks of illness from Shiga toxin-producing *E.coli* have been associated with the ingestion of undercooked hamburgers or ground beef, contact with raw beef and other meat, contaminated natural water bodies (lakes, streams rivers), raw or unpasteurized milk and raw or unpasteurized milk products like cheese, unpasteurized fruit juice, spinach, lettuce, strawberries, and green onions.

The sale of raw milk is legal with specific postings, however it is recommended that raw milk and raw milk products not be served to infants, toddlers, pregnant women, or any person suffering from a chronic disease or a suppressed immune system to protect consumers from the consequences of foodborne infection by pathogens that can be found in raw milk.

In general, symptoms can include fever, bloody diarrhea and complications leading HUS. HUS occurs in about 1 % of cases of hemorrhagic *E. coli*. Should you encounter patients with bloody diarrhea or diarrhea with fever; test for Shiga toxin producing *E. coli*, Salmonella, Shigella and Campylobacter.

Suggested prevention tips for your patients include:

- Prepare and consume food carefully. Many raw foods may be contaminated with harmful bacteria. Certain raw foods should always be treated as if they are contaminated: raw meat and poultry, including ground beef and chicken, eggs, fruits and vegetables. Thoroughly cook beef and chicken products and thoroughly wash all fruits and vegetables before consuming.
- Wash hands carefully especially after handling diapers, before preparing food, and after contact with pets, animals and birds.
- Prevent cross contamination between raw meats and food meant to be eaten without further cooking.
- Clean surfaces using a 10 % bleach solution and paper towels if concerned about environmental contamination. It is adequate to disinfect most visibly clean surfaces.
- Prevent children from drinking from natural water bodies such as lakes and rivers.

**Thank you for continuing to report Notifiable Conditions.** Information is available at: [www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/personalhealth/communicabledisease/report.html](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/personalhealth/communicabledisease/report.html)

TO REPORT A NOTIFIABLE CONDITION IN THURSTON COUNTY	
Voice mail for reporting <b>Non-immediately reportable conditions (24 hours a day)</b>	Phone: 360-786-5470 Fax: 360-867-2601
<b>Day time immediately reportable conditions</b>	360-867-2500 ask staff to locate Communicable Disease staff
<b>After hours for immediately and 24 hour reportable conditions or a public health emergency</b>	Call 911 and ask staff to locate the Health Officer.
No one is available with Thurston County Public Health and condition is <b>immediately notifiable</b>	1-877-539-4344