**Shiga-toxin producing *E. coli* O121 Infections,**  
The Thurston County Public Health, May 2014

**Action requested:**
- Be aware of recent Shiga-toxin producing *E. coli* (STEC) O121 infections believed associated with clover sprout consumption.
- Consider STEC infection in all persons with bloody diarrhea and persons with bloody or non-bloody diarrhea and a history of sprout consumption during the exposure period (usually 3-4 days but may be 1-10 days).
- Collect a stool specimen and request *E. coli* testing by culture and Shiga toxin test in patients with symptoms compatible with STEC infection,
  - If bloody diarrhea is present, laboratory evaluation should include a complete blood count, serum electrolytes, BUN, and creatinine
  - Obtain Shiga toxin immunoassays in addition to cultures, immunoassays should not replace culture on a sorbitol MacConkey agar plate

Report confirmed or suspected STEC cases immediately to Thurston County Public Health.

**Obtain the following history during the exposure period (1 to 10 days before symptom onset):**
- Dietary history, including: meats, raw produce, unpasteurized juices or dairy products, and **sprouts**
- Group and restaurant meals, including meal dates, restaurant names, and restaurant addresses
- Travel history with travel dates and destinations
- Animal exposures (pets, farms, etc.)

**Background**
Ten recent cases of Shiga-toxin producing *E. coli* O121 infections have been reported in Washington State (including King and Spokane County) and Idaho. Nine of the cases reported consuming raw clover sprouts during their exposure period. An investigation is ongoing to identify exposure source and locations where contaminated sprouts might have been distributed. It is possible that exposures may be ongoing.

Three Shiga-toxin producing infections have been reported in Thurston County in May though they do not appear to be associated with this outbreak. We know that sprouts suspected as the cause of cases in Washington and Idaho were distributed though multiple retail locations in Thurston County and have been pulled from distribution.
To Report a Notifiable Condition in Thurston County

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<th>Type of Condition</th>
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| Non-immediately reportable conditions (24 hours a day) | Phone: 360-786-5470  
Fax: 360-867-2601 |
| Day time immediately reportable conditions | 360-867-2500 ask staff to locate Communicable Disease staff |
| After hours immediately and 24 hour reportable conditions or a public health emergency | Call 911 and ask staff to locate the Health Officer. |
| No one is available with Thurston County Public Health and condition is Immediately notifiable | 1-877-539-4344 |

Thank you for helping to protect the health of Thurston County

Resources
- CDC STEC and E. coli FAQ: [www.cdc.gov/ecoli/general/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ecoli/general/index.html)