



Communicable Diseases E. COLI

E. coli is caused by a bacteria (germ) and is spread in the stool (bowel movement) and is often referred to as “hamburger disease”.

E. coli or more specifically **Escherichia coli 0157:H7** is a dangerous bacteria that naturally occurs in cattle. You become ill by eating undercooked ground beef and unpasteurized milk. Unpasteurized apple cider has been the cause of outbreaks where fallen apples have been contaminated by cow manure. You can pass it to others by the fecal-oral route if you fail to thoroughly wash hands or utensils after handling meat. E. Coli is an infection of the bowel.

It causes symptoms such as:

- Diarrhea (watery and sometimes bloody)
- Stomach cramps/vomiting
- Mild fever

Symptoms occur from 1-8 days after exposure, but usually within 3-4 days. Symptoms usually last 8 days.

Escherichia coli 0157:H7 has been recognized as an important cause of hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS) and colitis. HUS is the most frequent

cause of acute renal failure in children and infants.

Preventing the spread of E.Coli

- Ground beef should be cooked thoroughly so there is no pink color and juices are clear.
- Restaurant and home cooked hamburgers should be split open after cooking to ensure they have been completely cooked.
- Only drink pasteurized milk and cider products.
- Adults and children should thoroughly wash their hands after going to the bathroom to prevent secondary infections.
- Extreme care should be exercised with baby diapers and hands should be thoroughly washed after changing diapers.
- Hands should be thoroughly washed after handling raw meat, especially ground beef.
- Surfaces and utensils should be thoroughly cleaned after contact with raw meat.