

Health Alerts

Health Advisory #179 - ADDENDUM - UPDATE: Escherichia coli 0157:H7 in Erie County Linked to Multi-State Outbreak- 09/15/2006

- On 9/14/06 the FDA issued a warning regarding a serious foodborne Escherichia coli (E. coli) 0157:H7 multi-state outbreak resulting in at least 49 persons becoming ill, and one death. The outbreak may be associated with bagged, fresh spinach consumption.
- In the past two weeks, the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) has received reports of 6 cases of E.coli O157:H7 infections. Thus far, 4 of the cases have been linked to the national outbreak using laboratory confirmation methods (pulse field gel electrophoresis [PFGE]). All 6 cases report consuming bagged, fresh spinach.
- Providers are asked to remain vigilant, maintain a high index of suspicion for E.coli 0157:H7 in patients presenting with bloody diarrhea, and are asked to report suspected cases to the Erie County Department of Health.
- Testing for E. coli O157:H7 should be requested on stools collected from suspicious cases.
- Since hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS) is a known sequelae, providers should consider following patients with bloody diarrhea with urinalysis and blood electrolyte laboratory testing.
- To report E. coli O157:H7 cases or for questions, please call the ECDOH at (716) 858-7697 (Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM) or (716) 898-4225 (evenings, weekends, and holidays).
- Hospitals should continue to report cases of bloody diarrhea with the daily Emergency Department Surveillance.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information about E. coli is available at the CDC's website:

http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/escherichiacoli_g.htm