

SHIGA TOXIN-PRODUCING *E. COLI* INFECTION

WHAT ARE SHIGA TOXIN-PRODUCING *E. COLI*?

- *E. coli* are bacteria that live in the environment, food and intestines of humans and animals.
- Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* are specific kinds of *E. coli* that cause disease by producing a toxin called Shiga toxin.

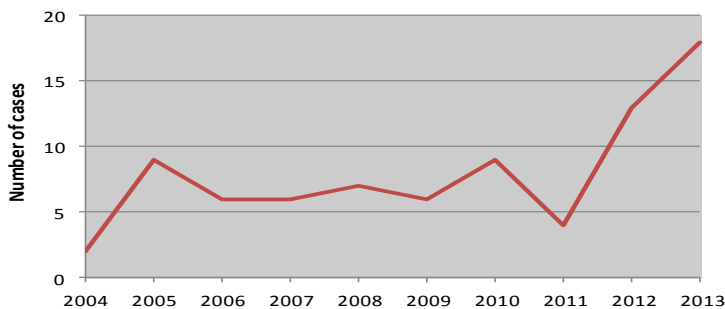
WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

- Diarrhea (often bloody).
- Mild to severe stomach cramps.
- Vomiting.

HOW IS THE INFECTION SPREAD?

- Eating foods contaminated with feces.
- Eating undercooked meat, especially ground beef, or meat that has been needle-tenderized.
- Consuming unpasteurized (raw) dairy products (like milk), juice or cider
- Having contact with cattle or other animals.
- Having contact with the feces of an infected person.
- Swimming in or drinking sewage-contaminated water.

**Infections Caused by
Shiga Toxin-Producing *E. coli*,
DeKalb County, 2004-2013**



HOW CAN I PREVENT INFECTION?

- Wash hands with soap and warm water:
 - ⇒ before touching food.
 - ⇒ before touching a baby bottle or pacifier.
 - ⇒ after going to the bathroom.
 - ⇒ after changing diapers.
 - ⇒ after touching animals or their environments.
 - ⇒ after touching raw meats.
- Keep raw meats separate from ready-to-eat foods.
- Cook all meats thoroughly. Use a meat thermometer. Ground beef should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F. Temperature is a better indicator of doneness than color.
- Refrigerate food promptly.
- Wash all produce thoroughly, even if it does not look dirty.
- Do not consume unpasteurized milk or other dairy products.
- Do not drink unpasteurized juice or cider.
- Disinfect food-preparation surfaces, utensils, and diaper changing stations after each use.
- Properly dispose of diapers in a closed-lid garbage can.
- Do not allow an infected person to work in daycare settings, patient care, or food-handling.
- Properly chlorinate your swimming pool.
- Do not swallow lake or pool water while swimming.
- Do not drink untreated water.

Sources: Chin J, editor. *Control of Communicable Diseases Manual*. 17th ed. Washington: American Public Health Association; 2000.
<http://www.cdc.gov/ecoli/general/>.
<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/EcoliInfection/>.

HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Call the DeKalb County Board of Health at (404) 508-7851 or visit us at www.dekalbhealth.net.

