



Population and Public Health
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Dear Health Care Provider:

Re: Ecoli Outbreak in Canada

In light of the recent recall of beef products due to Ecoli O157:H7 (a Shiga Toxin-Producing E. coli or STEC) and cases of STEC in Saskatchewan and Alberta; Public Health would encourage Ecoli testing (stool C&S) for any patients who present with bloody diarrhea.

Symptoms of STEC include abdominal pain, diarrhea (often bloody), nausea and vomiting. Fever may or may not be present. Incubation period is 2-10 days, with a median of 3-4 days. Patients generally recover within 5-7 days however some develop Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS) usually 7 days after onset of symptoms, when diarrhea is improving. Symptoms of HUS may include severe tiredness, paleness and reduced urinary output.

Antibiotics are generally not recommended to patients with suspected STEC as some studies have shown that administering antibiotics to patients with STEC infections may increase this risk of developing HUS. However, clinical decision making must be tailored to each individual patient.

For more information on outbreak please visit the CFIA website at <http://www.inspection.gc.ca>

Sincerely,

Julie Kryzanowski
MD, CCFP, FRCPC
Deputy Medical Health Officer

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