

- Change your dish cloth often
- Sanitize cutting boards with a mild bleach solution (1 tsp bleach per quart of water; 5 mls/litre). Put plastic boards in the dishwasher.

7.

CHECK YOUR BBQ SKILLS. Cook ground meats and poultry thoroughly. The centre of hamburger patties should be brown, and juices should be clear. Patties should be cooked to an internal temperature of 71°C – 74°C (160°F – 165°F).



- Put cooked meat and poultry on clean plates. Discard any leftover marinade used on raw meat or poultry.
- Serve cooked meat and poultry after cooking OR keep them hot above 60°C (140°F). Do not leave at room temperature.
- Refrigerate leftover food soon after a meal. Reheat leftover food to 74°C (165°F).

Other things you can do:

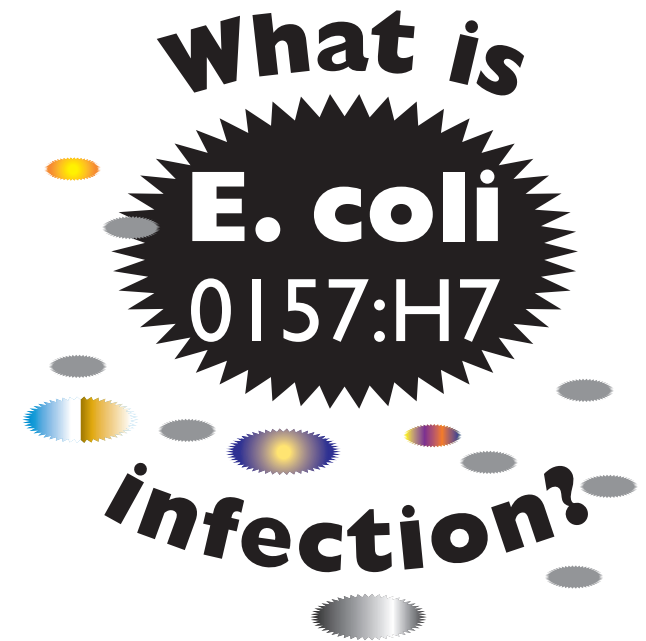
- Do not order or accept rare or undercooked ground meat when eating away from home.
- Be very careful when preparing food outdoors.
- Do not drink unpasteurized milk or juice.
- Wash your hands with warm, soapy water after using the toilet, changing diapers and handling pets.

Person-to-person spread of the bacteria is a frequent cause of illness.

- Hand washing helps stop the spread of illness in homes, child care centres, nursing homes and food service.
- Do not share towels, baths or wading pools with someone who has diarrhea.

For more information call 943-8030.

**Environmental Health
Healthy Communities**



How can it be prevented?



calgary health region

Infection from E. coli O157:H7 is very common worldwide.

This bacteria produces a toxin or poison that can damage the lining of the intestine. The bacteria was first recognized in 1982, when illness was traced to contaminated hamburgers.

What are the symptoms?

Two to 10 days after eating food contaminated with E.coli O157:H7 bacteria, people may get severe stomach cramps. Some people will develop watery diarrhea; some of these people may later develop bloody diarrhea. Vomiting and/or mild fever may occur. Most people get better in 7–10 days.

However, young children or the elderly may develop Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS). This is a life threatening illness. The E.coli O157:H7 bacteria cause bleeding and destroy the red blood cells in the kidneys. The kidneys shut down and urine is no longer produced.

Where do the bacteria come from?

Cattle are the main source of E. coli O157:H7 bacteria. During slaughter the meat of infected animals can become contaminated. When meat is ground, bacteria are spread throughout the meat. That is why hamburger patties should be cooked through to the centre.

Other foods linked to illness.

Most illness has been linked to undercooked ground beef. However, any food can be contaminated if not handled safely. Other foods linked to recent outbreaks include:

- unpasteurized milk
- unpasteurized apple juice and apple cider
- lettuce
- cold cuts such as dry salami
- raw sprouts

Illness has also been linked to drinking untreated or contaminated water, and swimming at a crowded lake.

Many children worldwide have become ill with E. coli infection after contact with animals. Children and adults should always wash their hands after touching pets, and animals at farms, petting zoos, and exhibits

It only takes a few bacteria to cause illness.

Key steps in preventing E. coli infection

1. At the store, put meat and poultry in plastic bags to stop the juices from dripping on other foods in the shopping cart. Refrigerate or freeze meat and poultry soon after buying.
2. Thaw frozen meat and poultry in the refrigerator, in cold water or in the microwave. Store meat on a plate on the lowest shelf in your refrigerator.
3. Wash your hands with warm, soapy water before preparing food, after handling raw meat and poultry, and before eating.
4. Wash all fruits, vegetables and salad greens. Scrub melons with a vegetable brush.
5. When making hamburgers use a spoon instead of your hands, to mix the ground meat. Use disposable gloves (or put a small plastic bag on each hand) to make patties or meatballs. Then wash your hands with soap and water. Cook the patties right away, or put them in the refrigerator.
6. Prevent cross contamination in the kitchen.
 - Do not let raw meats and poultry touch other foods.
 - Wash your hands after preparing raw meat and poultry.
 - Wash sinks, dishes, knives, cutting boards and counters with hot, soapy water.