Cryptosporidiosis Associated with a Private Party on a Farm

November Scott County

A routine surveillance interview of a laboratory-confirmed cryptosporidiosis case conducted by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) on November 20, 2012 revealed that the case had attended a child's birthday party held at a farm on November 9. At the time, contact information for the party host was not available for additional follow up. On December 12, a second laboratory-confirmed cryptosporidiosis case was interviewed through routine surveillance (the original contact number provided was not in service and thus contacting the case was delayed) and also reported attending the same child's birthday party on November 9. An outbreak investigation was initiated.

All cases of cryptosporidiosis reported to MDH are interviewed about food consumption, animal contact, and other potential exposures as part of enteric disease surveillance in Minnesota.
A case was defined as a person who developed either a laboratory-confirmed *Cryptosporidium* infection or diarrhea (≥3 loose stools in a 24-hour period) or vomiting lasting 3 or more days, after attending the November 9 birthday party, with illness onset 2 to 14 days following the party.

An MDH epidemiologist worked with the parents of the two reported cases to get contact information for the party host in order to facilitate the investigation.The two cases reported onsets of November 14 and November 15. Both cases were female and 9 years old. Both reported diarrhea, cramping, and fever. One case reported weight loss and the other case was unsure if they had lost any weight. One case reported an incubation of 5 days and one reported an incubation of 7 days. Neither case had recovered by the time of interview.

Contact information for the party host was provided by a parent of one of the initial two cases. An MDH epidemiologist contacted the party host to get a complete list of birthday party attendees. The party host declined to provide this information. However, the host did agree to answer some questions.

A total of 10 children attended the party, including 4 of the birthday girl's siblings. Two adults also attended. This was a sleepover birthday party.

While at the birthday party the children petted goats, horses, mini llamas, chickens, and ducks. They also bottle fed two calves that had been purchased 2 weeks prior to the party. One of the calves had diarrhea at the time of the party. MDH offered to test the animals on the farm, but the party host declined.

The children ate frozen pizza, popcorn, and ice cream cake the night of the party and pancakes with milk and apple juice for breakfast the next morning.

One additional case was identified by speaking with the party host; this third case was the birthday girl. She became ill 5 days after her party and reported diarrhea, cramps, fever, and weight loss. Her duration of illness was 9 days. A stool kit was sent to her and returned to MDH. Her stool tested negative for *Cryptosporidium.* The party host denied any other illness among party attendees.

This was an outbreak of cryptosporidiosis associated with a birthday party held on a farm. Although no animal testing was performed, the likely cause of the outbreak was bottle feeding two calves, one of which had diarrhea at the time of the party.