



Minnesota Department of Health

PROTECTING. MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF ALL MINNESOTANS

Minnesota health officials investigating 13 cases of *E. coli* O111 infection

Minnesota Department of Health sent this bulletin at 07/14/2014 01:41 PM CDT



Minnesota Department of Health

PROTECTING. MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF ALL MINNESOTANS

News Release

Monday, July 14, 2014

Minnesota health officials investigating 13 cases of *E. coli* O111 infection

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is investigating 13 cases of foodborne illness associated with a type of *E. coli* bacteria known as *E. coli* O111. This form of *E. coli* is in the same family as the more well-known *E. coli* O157:H7. All of the illnesses were caused by the same genetic strain of *E. coli* O111, and the ill people do not all share any obvious commonalities; these facts indicate the illnesses resulted from a widely distributed food item.

While seven of the people with *E. coli* O111 infections reported eating at Applebee's restaurants in Minnesota between June 24 and 27, there are multiple cases with no apparent connection to the restaurant. Applebee's is cooperating fully with the investigation, and as a precaution volunteered to remove the Oriental Chicken salad from menus at all its Minnesota restaurants while the investigation continues. The restaurant is also removing specific ingredients of its Oriental Chicken salad from other items on its menu out of an abundance of caution. Health officials are still working with Applebee's, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, and other regulatory partners to determine the cause of the outbreak.

Symptoms of illness caused by *E. coli* O111 typically include stomach cramps and diarrhea, often with bloody stools, but only a low-grade or no fever. People usually become ill two to five days after exposure, but this time period can range from one to at least eight days. Most people recover in five to 10 days. Complications from infection are more common among those with weaker immune systems, including young children and the elderly. MDH investigators note that this genetic strain of *E. coli* O111 has not been seen in the United States previously.

Health officials say anyone who visited a Minnesota Applebee's since June 20 and has symptoms of *E. coli* O111 infection (particularly bloody diarrhea) should contact their health care provider immediately and inform them of their possible involvement in this outbreak. MDH also asks that they contact the

department's foodborne illness hotline at 1-877-FOOD-ILL (1-877-366-3455) to report the potential connection.

Four of the 13 people who became ill were hospitalized, and all have recovered or are recovering. Diarrhea associated with *E. coli* O111 infection should NOT be treated with antibiotics, as this practice might promote further complications. More information on *E. coli* infection can be found at www.health.state.mn.us. MDH will share more information with the public as the investigation continues.

-MDH-

Media inquiries:

[Michael Schommer](#)

MDH Communications

651-201-4998

 **SHARE**

You can update or cancel your subscription at any time by [editing your personal profile](#). All you will need are your e-mail address and your password (if you have selected one).

This service is provided free of charge by: [Minnesota Department of Health](#).

P.S. If you have any questions or problems please contact subscriberhelp.govdelivery.com for assistance.

STAY CONNECTED:



[MDH on Twitter](#)



[MDH on Facebook](#)

Powered by 