

E. coli Outbreak - Latest Updates

Latest updates on the E. coli outbreak that was declared in Calgary September 4, 2023.

September 11, 2023

As of this morning, September 11th, we have a total of 231 lab-confirmed cases connected to this outbreak.

There are currently 26 patients receiving care in hospital. 25 children and 1 adult are hospitalized. Additionally, 11 patients have been discharged from hospital since the beginning of this outbreak.

21 patients have been confirmed as having severe illness/hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS). They are stable and receiving the appropriate care in hospital.

Based on the epidemiology of the cases we've seen to date, it is highly likely the source of this outbreak is food that was distributed from the central kitchen. At this point, AHS has not been able to identify a food item that was the source. We continue to investigate.

It is important to note that the majority of individuals who get sick from E. coli generally improve on their own and without specific treatment within 10 days, but a small proportion may develop more severe complications.

We continue to keep affected families informed and equipped with guidance on which symptoms to monitor for, testing, and next steps. Parents should visit www.ahs.ca/ecoli for further information.

Alberta Children's Hospital has established a dedicated clinic to monitor symptomatic patients after their initial emergency department visit, as well as for patients who have been discharged from hospital. Follow up clinics have also been established at South Health Campus and Peter Lougheed Centre for these patients.

If you are concerned about yourself or your children starting to develop symptoms, please call Health Link at 8-1-1. If children develop symptoms, including bloody diarrhea, please visit the Emergency Department. If your child is not symptomatic, please do not take them to hospital. If you have concerns or questions, call Health Link at 8-1-1 or get in touch with your family physician and they will give you the advice and support you need.

September 10, 2023

As of this morning, September 10th, we have a total of 190 lab-confirmed cases connected to this outbreak.

There are currently 27 patients receiving care in hospital. Additionally, 7 patients have been discharged from hospital since the beginning of this outbreak.

20 patients have been confirmed as having severe illness/hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS). They are stable and receiving the appropriate care in hospital.

Based on the epidemiology of the cases we've seen to date, it is highly likely the source of this outbreak is food that was distributed from the central kitchen. At this point, AHS has not been able to identify a food item that was the source. We continue to investigate.

It is important to note that the majority of individuals who get sick from E. coli generally improve on their own and without specific treatment within 10 days, but a small proportion may develop more severe complications.

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If your child is not symptomatic, please do not take them to hospital. If you have concerns or questions, call Health Link at 8-1-1 or get in touch with your family physician and they will give you the advice and support you need.

There are currently 11 facilities which have been issued closure orders.

Four of the 11 facilities have not had anyone who has tested positive for STEC (E. coli). They include Fueling Brains Bridgeland, Little Oak Early Education, Almond Branch, and Brainer Academy.

AHS is rescinding the closure orders for those four facilities effective September 11, as long as no one from the site tests positive for STEC (E. coli) before this time. Any decisions on site reopening after the closure orders are lifted are made by the operator. Staff and children from these four facilities do not need stool testing to return if they have had no gastrointestinal symptoms and have not been told otherwise by AHS.

Public Health Inspectors have assessed the readiness of these four facilities to reopen and ensured that they have taken appropriate measures such as cleaning and disinfection.

Some people from the other seven facilities have tested positive for STEC (E. coli). Young children (those not 5 years or older by Dec 31, 2023) and staff from these seven facilities who

have had NO gastrointestinal symptoms must test negative for STEC (E. coli) before they can attend ANY childcare facility to ensure the safety of others.

The closure orders for the remaining seven facilities will be rescinded September 12th. Young children (those not 5 years or older by Dec 31, 2023) and staff will require clearance from health officials for the safety of all at the childcare facility.

AHS Public Health staff have started to contact individuals directly to discuss test results and discuss any new symptoms. Verbal and written rescind notices will be provided as they are confirmed. We appreciate your patience as we carefully work through this process. Individuals will be updated directly. Please do not call AHS or Health Link for results.

The central kitchen that provides food services for these daycares remains closed at this time.

September 9, 2023

As of this morning, September 9th, we have a total of 164 lab-confirmed cases connected to this outbreak.

There are currently 27 patients receiving care in hospital. Additionally, 6 patients have been discharged from hospital since the beginning of this outbreak.

19 patients have been confirmed as having severe illness/hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS). They are stable and receiving the appropriate care in hospital.

Based on the epidemiology of the cases we've seen to date, it is highly likely the source of this outbreak is food that was distributed from the central kitchen. At this point, AHS has collected food samples for testing and awaiting results. At this time AHS has not been able to identify with certainty the exact food item that was the source. We continue to investigate.

It is important to note that the majority of individuals who get sick from E. coli generally improve on their own and without specific treatment within 10 days, but a small proportion may develop more severe complications.

We continue to keep affected families informed and equipped with guidance on which symptoms to monitor for, testing, and next steps. Parents should visit www.ahs.ca/ecoli for further information.

Alberta Children's Hospital has established a dedicated clinic to monitor symptomatic patients after their initial emergency department visit, as well as for patients who have been discharged from hospital.

If you are concerned about yourself or your children starting to develop symptoms, please call Health Link at 8-1-1. If children develop symptoms, including bloody diarrhea, please visit the Emergency Department.

If your child is not symptomatic, please do not take them to hospital. If you have concerns or questions, call Health Link at 8-1-1 or get in touch with your family physician and they will give you the advice and support you need.

September 7, 2023

As of this morning (September 7), we have a total of 128 lab-confirmed cases connected to this outbreak.

There are currently 25 patients receiving care in hospital (20 at Alberta Children's Hospital and 5 at Peter Lougheed Centre). Additionally, three patients have been discharged from hospital.

Alberta Children's Hospital is well-equipped to handle this situation, and AHS is supporting the site with resources from elsewhere in the zone. As needed, additional inpatient beds are available at the Peter Lougheed Hospital and some patients are being looked after at that site.

Nine patients have been confirmed as having hemolytic uremic syndrome. They are stable and receiving the appropriate care in hospital.

AHS is also aware of three patients linked to the daycares that are receiving care outside of Alberta.

It is important to note that the majority of individuals who get sick from E. coli generally improve on their own and without specific treatment within 10 days, but a small proportion may develop more severe complications.

Our staff has been working with the operators of the 11 facilities which have been issued Closure Orders by our public health inspectors. These sites will remain closed until AHS determines it is safe for them to re-open.

We continue to keep affected families informed and equipped with guidance on which symptoms to monitor for, and next steps. Parents should visit www.ahs.ca/ecoli for further information.

Alberta Children's Hospital has established a dedicated clinic to monitor symptomatic patients after their initial emergency department visit, as well as for patients who have been discharged from hospital.

If you are concerned about yourself or your children starting to develop symptoms, please call Health Link at 8-1-1. If children develop symptoms, including bloody diarrhea, please visit the Emergency Department.

If your child is not symptomatic, please don't take them to hospital. If you have concerns or questions, call Health Link or get in touch with your family physician and they will give you the advice and support you need.

September 5, 2023

An E. coli outbreak has been declared for six locations of a Calgary daycare and five additional sites that share a central kitchen. All eleven daycare sites in the Calgary area have been issued a closure order until issues are resolved.

At this time, 56 lab-confirmed cases have been linked to the outbreak, as well as 15 individuals hospitalized, and up to 50 children presenting to hospital.

Families with children attending any of the above locations have been sent letters advising of the outbreak and are being asked to monitor for symptoms.

If you are concerned about yourself or your children starting to develop symptoms, please call Health Link at 8-1-1. If children develop severe symptoms (e.g. bloody diarrhea), please visit the Emergency Department.

We continue to keep affected families informed and equipped with guidance on which symptoms to monitor for, and next steps.

AHS will continue to update the public with information as it becomes available.

Background

E. coli is a type of bacterial infection that is most commonly caused by eating contaminated food.

The predominant symptom associated with E. coli is diarrhea, which may be bloody. Symptoms usually start one to 10 days after eating food contaminated with the E. coli bacteria.

The majority of individuals who get sick from E. coli generally improve on their own and without specific treatment within 10 days, but a proportion may develop more severe complications. Antibiotics are not necessary or helpful for this infection.

Children, the elderly and the immunocompromised are at greater risk of complications from this strain of E. coli.