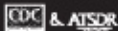




***E. COLI* O157:H7
INFECTION**

Department of Health and Human Services

***E. COLI* O157:H7 INFECTION**

E. coli is a type of bacteria. Most kinds of *E. coli* are harmless and live in the intestines of healthy people and animals, but some types can make you sick. In 1982, scientists discovered that an *E. coli* named O157:H7 could make people very sick. Most people who get sick from *E. coli* O157:H7 will have bloody diarrhea and cramps for about a week and then get better on their own. But sometimes *E. coli* O157:H7 infections can make a person's kidneys stop working, and some people can die. You can avoid getting sick from this type of *E. coli* by ensuring that all ground beef or hamburger you eat is cooked enough to kill the bacteria. The best way to tell if a hamburger is cooked enough is to put a meat thermometer into the center and make sure it reads at least 160°F. Do not eat hamburgers that are pink in the middle. Wash hands, utensils, and counters with hot soapy water after they touch raw meat. Never place cooked hamburgers on an unwashed plate that held raw meat. Drink properly treated water and pasteurized milk and juice. Avoid swimming in crowded pools or lakes without adequate toilet facilities. Wash fruits and vegetables, especially those that will not be cooked. Wash your hands with soap and warm water before preparing food, before eating, and after you use the bathroom.

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