



2013-07-23-050 E. coli EHEC - USA (18): (NY) waterborne
To: (03) Food-borne, water-borne and air-borne diseases;

E. COLI EHEC - USA (18): (NEW YORK) WATERBORNE

A ProMED-mail post

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Source: PressConnects [edited]

<http://www.pressconnects.com/article/20130717/NEWS01/307170064/Broome-health-officials-report-two-E-Coli-infections-probably-Cole-Park>

At least two people who went swimming 23 Jun 2013 at Nathaniel Cole Park were treated for E. coli infections, Broome County [New York] health officials said Wednesday [17 Jul 2013].

In the wake of the confirmed E. coli cases, county park officials have increased the frequency of water testing at Cole Park's lake to every 3 days from its regular 2-week cycle. Only one test on 28 Jun

2013 showed an elevated E. coli bacteria level, which officials said could have been caused by heavy rain in preceding days. All others were within normal levels for coliform bacteria, which can cause diarrhea or others illnesses. County officials said the latest results from water samples taken Wednesday [17 Jul 2013] are expected Friday [19 Jul 2013].

E. coli can be linked to fecal contamination in swimming areas. The bacteria also could be contracted from contaminated food, including undercooked meat, or person-to-person contact. An estimated 800 others swam in the lake on 23 Jun 2013, and thousands in following weeks, with no other confirmed cases, county officials said.

The 2 people with E. coli are recovering, according to a news release. The county would not identify them or the extent of illnesses in order to respect their privacy. "Symptoms were 1st reported to the Health Department and then investigated over a period of time thereafter," said Bijoy Datta, deputy Broome County executive. "Cole Park and all other county parks remain safe for swimming and other recreation."

County officials did not provide an exact timeline of what happened in the 3.5-week time period from 23 Jun 2013 until the public was informed, although the lapse can partially be explained because the health department was not immediately aware of the infections.

"We are committed to the health and safety of our residents and those who use our parks and waterways," Datta said. "We are also vigilant in providing timely and accurate information to ensure public health and safety are not compromised."

In late spring 2011, dozens of swimmers at Greenwood Park [Broome County, New York] developed non-contagious itchy and rash-like symptoms that health officials linked to certain parasites of birds and animals. Health officials did extensive testing of Greenwood's water at the time. The swimming area remained open and no serious illnesses were reported.

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[A description of illness in one of the children affected describing severe abdominal pain in another article suggests that these cases are due to an enterohemorrhagic E. coli (EHEC). Drinking and recreational water have both been implicated as sources of EHEC in the past.



The illness described in the last paragraph is swimmer's itch, caused by cutaneous invasion of the cercariae of avian schistosomiasis which does not further develop in the human host. As discussed by Mod.EP in the ProMED-mail post Swimmer's itch - USA (CT) 20061208.3464, swimmer's itch is found worldwide and is caused by cercariae of the avian schistosomes *Trichobilharzia* spp. and *Gigantobilharzia* spp.

penetrating the skin of persons swimming or wading through infected water. Birds are the main hosts, and the cercariae emerge from the intermediate molluscan hosts living in the water. Humans are the wrong host and as soon as the cercariae have penetrated the skin, they die, which causes an intense inflammation seen as a severely itching rash which lasts about one week and is always self-limiting.

The infection never develops into a schistosomiasis-like systemic disease. Prevention of the disease is difficult; the primary measure to be taken is avoiding water known to be infected. Treatment is primarily directed toward relief of symptoms using antihistamines and steroids. The condition is recognized as a risk for outdoor athletes (Adams BB. Dermatologic disorders of the athlete. Sports Med. 2002;32:309-21).

In severe cases one would expect to find an elevated eosinophil count and total IgE (immunoglobulin E). - Mod.LL

A HealthMap/ProMED-mail map can be accessed at:
<<http://healthmap.org/r/7FZ8>>.]

[see also:

E. coli EHEC - USA (17): (IL) restaurant 20130618.1780421 E. coli EHEC - USA (16): (IL) restaurant 20130616.1775354 E. coli. EHEC - USA (15): (MA) O157, RFI 20130613.1769899 E. coli EHEC - USA (14): (GA) O157, BBQ restaurant 20130603.1753213 E. coli EHEC - USA (13): (TX) O157, ground beef 20130521.1728086 E. coli EHEC - USA (12): (GA) O157, BBQ restaurant 20130521.1728085 E. coli EHEC - USA (11): (GA) O157 20130520.1725767 E. coli EHEC - USA (10): (TX) O157 20130508.1699529 E. coli EHEC - USA (09): O121 frozen snacks 20130427.1676465 E. coli EHEC USA (08): (WI), raw milk susp. 20130427.1676464 E. coli EHEC - USA (07): (WI) O157 20130417.1652752 E. coli EHEC - USA (06): O121, frozen snacks, expanded recall 20130405.1622970 E. coli EHEC - USA (05): frozen snacks, O121 20130329.1609768 E. coli EHEC - USA (04): (HI) O157, RFI 20130329.1608962 E. coli EHEC - USA (03): (WI) O157, ground beef, alert, recall:

20130120.1504890

E. coli EHEC - USA (02): (MO) O103, unpasteurized cheese, recall

20130115.1498763

E. coli EHEC - USA: (MO) O103, unpasteurized dairy 20130113.1494759

2012

E. coli EHEC - USA (38): (multistate) spinach, O157 20121121.1416845 E. coli EHEC - USA (30):

(NC) O157, county fair 20121012.1339271 E. coli EHEC - USA (25): (OH) O157, picnic, fatality

20120726.1216440 E. coli EHEC - USA (14): (LA) fatality 20120605.1156789 E. coli EHEC, 2011 -

USA: (CA), raw milk, environmental source

20120122.1017852

E. coli EHEC, 2010 - USA: (MN) non-O157 venison kabob 20120117.1013136]
