



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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## **MULTIPLE E. COLI CASES REPORTED IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY**

*Public urged to carefully wash produce, thoroughly cook ground beef*

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) is investigating multiple cases of E.coli infection in the county. Eleven possible cases of E.coli 0157:H7 were reported to HHSA from Sept. 30 to Oct. 4. No deaths have been reported.

E.coli 0157:H7 infection is caused by a strain of the E.coli bacteria, which can cause abdominal cramping, bloody diarrhea, vomiting and nausea. Anyone experiencing these symptoms is advised to call their physician.

HHSA is working closely with the San Diego County Department of Environmental Health and California Department of Health Services officials to determine the source of E.coli infection. Possible sources include lettuce and beef. The public is urged to wash produce carefully, including bagged lettuce, and to cook all ground beef or hamburger to a temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit, making sure the meat is brown to the center. Cooking ground beef medium to well done is advised as a regular precaution.

The public also is urged to wash hands with soap and hot water before and after handling raw meat, keeping raw meat away from ready-to-eat foods, using clean containers or surfaces to hold cooked meat, and washing cutting boards and utensils between preparation of raw and cooked meats.

HHSA has notified physicians throughout the county about the cases through its EMAN Alert system. There were 32 cases of E.coli 0157:H7 reported to HHSA in 2000, 23 cases in 2001 and 21 cases in 2002.

For more information on E.coli, please visit the Centers for Disease Control Web site, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

**The latest updates will be given at a news conference at 3:30 p.m. today at the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency, 1700 Pacific Hwy., San Diego.**

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