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NF94-158 Escherichia coli 0157:H7

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Escherichia coli 0157:H7

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- The Disease:** Symptoms of hemorrhagic colitis include severe abdominal cramps, followed by diarrhea (often bloody), nausea, vomiting, and occasionally a low-grade fever. A possible complication is hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS), a urinary tract infection that is a leading cause of acute kidney failure in children. Symptoms generally begin three to four days after the food is eaten, last up to 10 days, and often require hospitalization.
- The Organism:** The specific serotype 0157:H7 produces a toxin that can cause hemorrhagic colitis. This bacteria grows slowly at refrigeration temperature. *E. coli* 0157:H7 has been shown to grow in acidic food products such as apple cider and mayonnaise.
- Sources:** Several strains of *Escherichia coli* bacteria, frequently associated with fecally contaminated water, have long been known to cause diarrhea in infants and travelers. Raw or rare ground beef, unpasteurized milk and unpasteurized apple cider have been involved in some illnesses.
- Control:** Cooking ground beef to 157°F, reheating, good sanitation, and refrigeration at 40°F or below are all important to control this microorganism.

*File NF157 under FOOD AND NUTRITION
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