

What kind of infection is it?

E. coli is a bacteria that normally lives in the intestines of most people and most types are harmless. Enterohaggative *E. coli* (or EAEC) is a special kind of *E. coli* that has several tools that make them able to cause diarrhea.

How do people get infected?

- EAEC infections are caused by exposure to food, ice, or water contaminated with human or animal waste.
- EAEC causes diarrhea in children in both poor and wealthy countries and in adults who travel to developing countries.

What are the usual symptoms?

- Illness usually starts 1-3 days after exposure.
- Watery diarrhea, stomach pain or cramps. Diarrhea may contain mucous. Fever is rare.

How long does it last?

- Typically 3-4 days but some people may be ill for 14 days or longer.

How is it treated?

- Prevent dehydration by drinking fluids. For young children, use a rehydration solution such as Pedialyte® or Rehydralyte®. Even a few sips or spoonfuls at a time can help. Warning signs of dehydration include dry mouth, decreased urination, or dizziness.
- Antibiotics may shorten the duration of diarrhea for people with EAEC infection but often are not necessary.

Are there possible complications?

- Dehydration from fluid loss is the major complication.

Comments:

- Until recently, most doctors were not able to diagnose EAEC because testing was only available in research labs. Now that testing is available, doctors are still learning about this infection.
- Wash hands carefully with soap and water after going to the bathroom or changing diapers, cleaning up vomit or stool.
- Clean contaminated surfaces and disinfect with bleach solution (5-25 tablespoons of household bleach per gallon of water).
- People with diarrhea should not prepare food.