

**E. COLI UPDATE****NEWS**November 27, 2008  
2008/nr-113

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is investigating E. coli outbreaks that have the same DNA fingerprint in five local public health units. The ministry is coordinating the investigation because it involves multiple health units.

Listed below is the updated number of cases for each of the five public health units, as of Thursday, November 27, 2008:

	<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>Confirmed Cases</b>	<b>Probable Cases (*)</b>
Niagara	26	13	13
Guelph	26	7	19
Halton	12	6	6
Waterloo	2	2	0
Hamilton	1	1	0

(\*) – The number of probable cases has changed because a more stringent definition is being applied. Probable cases now only include cases with bloody diarrhea – previously all cases with diarrhea were included.

**QUICK FACTS**

- The source (or sources) of E. coli has not yet been confirmed. Ministry and health unit investigators – along with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency – are investigating whether the outbreaks are linked to romaine lettuce.
- It's important to wash fresh fruits and vegetables with clean running water to remove any surface dirt, sand and harmful organisms. Soaking in a big bowl of water is not recommended.
- Products that have been labelled as pre-washed should be washed again at home.
- Laboratory testing has determined that cases in the five health units have the same DNA fingerprint.
- There are about 350 cases of E. coli O157:H7 each year in Ontario.

**LEARN MORE**

Find out more information about [E. coli](#).

Find out about [laboratory testing for E. coli](#).

Read more about the public health units in [Niagara](#), [Halton](#), [Waterloo](#), [Guelph](#) and [Hamilton](#).

**For public inquiries call ServiceOntario, INFOLine at 1-866-532-3161 (Toll-free in Ontario only)**

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