

Enterotoxigenic *E. coli* (ETEC)



Distribution

This group of *Escherichia coli* known as ETEC caused an estimated 60,000 deaths from diarrhea in 2016 (Khalil, 2017).

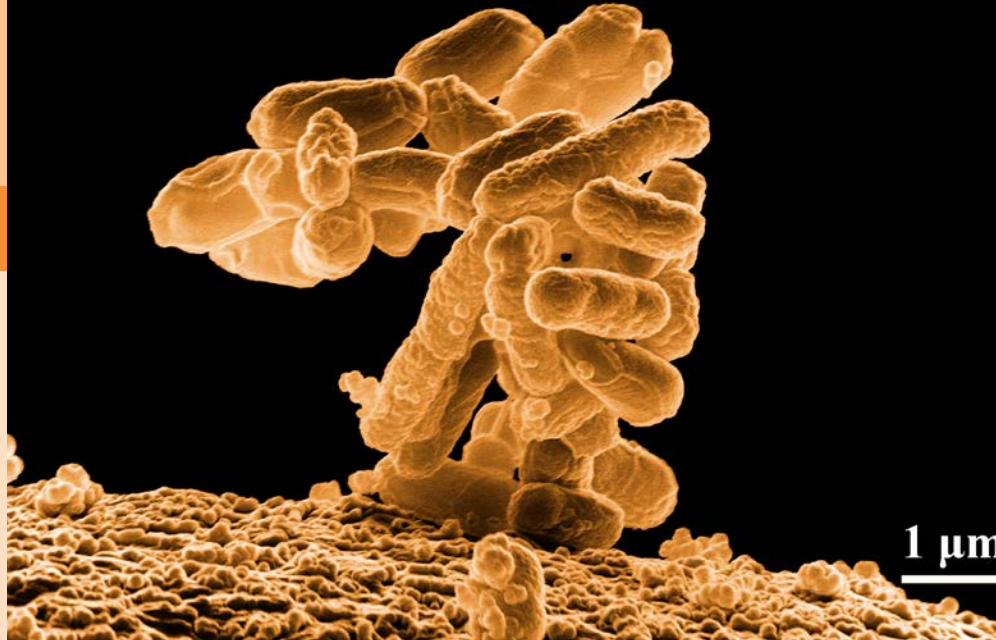


Cause

Consuming food or water contaminated with ETEC (bacteria).

E. coli bacteria are naturally found in human and animal intestines, and usually are not harmful. This specific group of *E. coli* (ETEC) releases toxins that cause people's intestines to secrete fluids, causing diarrhea.

Electron micrograph of a cluster of *E. coli* bacteria. Each bacterium is around 0.5 μm wide and 2 μm long. Image credit: Eric Erbe & Christopher Pooley / USDA (public domain).



Symptoms

A couple days after being infected, people usually experience stomach cramps and large amounts of watery diarrhea. They may also have fever, chills, nausea, and body aches. Symptoms usually last between three days and two weeks.



Prevention

- Treat and safely store all drinking water.
- Wash fruits and vegetables in safe drinking water; cook food thoroughly.
- Use improved latrines to keep feces from the environment.
- Use good hygiene, including handwashing with soap at all critical times.

HOUSEHOLD WATER TREATMENT OPTIONS

- Filters that are rated “very effective” for bacteria.
- Most disinfection options, including solar disinfection (SODIS), chlorine, and boiling.



Treatment

Most people can recover in a few days without treatment, unless they become severely dehydrated.

If dehydrated from diarrhea, drink oral rehydration solution. In severe cases, intravenous fluids may be required. Antibiotics can be used, but many strains of ETEC are resistant to common antibiotics.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). Enterotoxigenic *E. coli* (ETEC). Retrieved January 30, 2018, from <https://www.cdc.gov/ecoli/etec.html>

Khalil, I. (2017). The Global Burden of Shigella and Enterotoxigenic *E. coli*: Results from the Global Burden of Disease Study 2016. *Open Forum Infectious Diseases*, 4(Suppl 1), S365. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ofid/ofx163.892>

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