Your child may have been exposed to:

**E. coli O157:H7**

*Escherichia coli* O157:H7 (*E. coli* O157) can cause a bacterial infection of the intestines.

### Symptoms

Your child may have watery or bloody diarrhea, stomach cramps, and fever. Illness may last for up to 12 days.

If your child is infected, it may take 1 to 8 days for symptoms to start.

### Spread

- By eating or drinking contaminated food or beverages.
- By touching contaminated hands, surfaces, or objects.
- By handling pets and farm animals.

### Contagious Period

The illness can spread as long as *E. coli* O157 bacteria are in the stool. This could be for a few weeks or in a small number of children, this may be for 3 months.

### Call your Healthcare Provider

- If anyone in your home has symptoms. There is a medical test to detect the bacteria. Diarrhea caused by *E. coli* O157 usually goes away after a few days without any treatment. Treatments to stop diarrhea are usually not recommended.

- Ask how to prevent dehydration. Your child may lose a lot of water due to vomiting and diarrhea.

### Prevention

- Wash hands after using the toilet and changing diapers and before preparing food or eating. Your child may need help with handwashing.
- Clean and disinfect any objects that come in contact with stool. This includes toilets (potty chairs), sinks, toys, and diaper changing areas. Use a product that kills germs.
- Farm animals (especially cattle and calves) can cause *E. coli* O157. Wash your hands after touching pets and farm animals.
- Cook food thoroughly and do not drink unpasteurized milk or unpasteurized juice. Always disinfect cooking surfaces.
- Anyone with *E. coli* O157 should not use swimming beaches, pools, water parks, spas, or hot tubs until 2 weeks after the diarrhea has stopped.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Kentucky Department for Public Health  Frankfort, KY  http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/
Kentucky Regional Poison Center Louisville, KY  EMERGENCY: 1-800-222-1222
Lake Cumberland District Health Department Somerset, KY  www.lcdhd.org  (606) 678-4761
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Atlanta, GA  Toll free: 1-800-311-3435  www.cdc.gov

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