

CDRS

Communicable Disease Reporting System

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE FACT SHEET

HEMOLYTIC UREMIC SYNDROME (HUS)

For additional information, see *E. Coli 0157:H7*

Hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS) is a disease of blood clotting within the capillaries. As red blood cells pass through the clogged capillaries, they are sheared apart and broken. This is called hemolysis. The other part of the syndrome's name refers to kidney failure in which urea and other waste products build up in the bloodstream because the kidney cannot filter and dispose of them.

Symptoms

- The first stage of HUS frequently lasts from 1 to 15 days and may include gastrointestinal symptoms such as:
 - abdominal pain
 - bloody diarrhea
 - vomiting
- Severe problems in the bowel and colon may develop in some cases. In these cases, even if the gastroenteritis has stopped, a person may still exhibit the following symptoms:
 - irritability
 - fatigue
 - small, unexplained bruises or small clot-sized hemorrhages visible in the lining of the mouth
 - paleness
- The person may produce little urine because damaged red blood cells and other factors may clog the tiny blood vessels in the kidneys or cause lesions in the kidneys, making the kidneys work harder to remove wastes and extra fluid from the blood.

Transmission

- Most cases of HUS occur after an infection in the digestive tract caused by the *E. coli* bacterium. *E. coli* may be found in contaminated food, such as dairy products and meat.

Treatment

- There is no known treatment that can stop the progress of the syndrome once it has started.

All information is general in nature and is not intended to be used as a substitute for appropriate professional advice.

Franklin County



Board of Health

Report Disease With Ease - 24 hours a day

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Columbus and Franklin County Communicable Disease Reporting System

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