

July 30, 2025

To: AHS Physicians and Primary Care Providers

From: Calgary Zone Medical Officers of Health

Please note that a gastrointestinal (GI) outbreak has been declared at Saskatoon Farms (#20 80181 338 Ave E, Foothills County, AB). The pathogens presumptively identified and linked to the outbreak are ***Enteroinvasive Escherichia coli*** (EIEC) and ***Entamoeba histolytica***. We have identified other incidental gastrointestinal viruses including norovirus, sapovirus and rotavirus however, at this time, there is not sufficient evidence to link these pathogens to the outbreak.

Patients presenting with gastrointestinal symptoms who **visited Saskatoon Farms between July 1 to 18 and consumed food or beverages or water at the restaurant are strongly recommended to complete stool testing** (bacterial enteric panel and stool parasite screen). Symptomatic individuals are advised to see their primary care provider or reach out to 811 Health Link for a Virtual MD assessment.

Entamoeba histolytica is a parasite and a notifiable disease which can cause amoebiasis. The incubation period for amoebiasis ranges from a few days to several months or years but most commonly two to four weeks. Due to the potential long-term extraintestinal manifestations of amoebiasis and asymptomatic carriage, all individuals who consumed food or beverages or water between July 1 to 18 (even if asymptomatic) are recommended to complete testing after July 30, even if they have had testing prior to this date.

Recommendations:

- **Symptomatic individuals**
 - Clinically assess and use the APL [microbiology requisition \(https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/frm-20571.pdf\)](https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/frm-20571.pdf) for stool testing for **Bacterial Enteric Panel/Stool Culture and Stool Parasite Screen** ;
 - Please include the **exposure investigation number (EI 2025-855)** and indicate **that they are symptomatic in the Clinical Information/Suspected Organism** section to link to the Saskatoon Farm outbreak.
 - Patients may pick up stool testing kits from their nearest lab collection site or your office. If a full stool testing kit is not available a sterile container used for urine culture can be used.
 - Please ensure the stool collection container is clearly labelled with at least 2 unique patient identifiers, including the patient's full name and health care number if available.
 - Given the incubation period of *E. histolytica*, if negative for *E. histolytica* and the patient was tested before July 30, it is recommended to **repeat Stool Parasite Screen testing on/after July 30th** (see instructions below).

- **Asymptomatic individuals**
 - Do not require clinical assessment.
 - For this group of patients, requisitions and stool kits for **Stool Parasite Screen testing** may be collected from the Public Health Laboratory (ProvLab) located at Foothills Medical Centre, 3030 Hospital Drive, NW, Calgary **after July 30th**. Additional information and instructions are available at: ahs.ca/saskatoonfarm
 - If patients are unable to pick up a testing kit, you may provide them with a requisition (attached and available on the website, requires your name as the ordering provider), and then patients can pick up stool testing kits from their nearest lab collection site or your office (if you have them). If a full stool testing kit is not available, a sterile container used for urine culture can be used. Please ensure the stool collection container is clearly labelled with at least 2 patient identifiers, including the patient's full name.
 - Only one sample is needed
 - Note for you and your patient: uncommonly, people may only test positive and develop symptoms months to years after they are exposed (even if they have tested negative on this screen). The symptoms can be quite broad and rarely can cause severe illness. The condition is treatable even when it starts years after the exposure. In the future, please keep this in mind as part of your differential diagnosis if patients report having had an exposure to Saskatoon Farm during the exposure period (July 1-18)

Results:

EIEC

The lab will report results as “Test for Shigella/Enteroinvasive E. coli” –either Positive or Negative. If someone was at Saskatoon Farms during the exposure period and tests positive, they are presumed to have EIEC based on this polymerase chain reaction (PCR) result and no additional testing is needed.

If testing is positive for **EIEC**, this is generally **self-limited** and can be managed with **supportive treatment**. **Antimicrobial therapy is generally not indicated** due to the self-limited nature of this disease, however, if severe please direct to emergency care if indicated. Antimicrobials may be considered in consultation with Infectious Disease specialists.

E. histolytica

E. histolytica results will be reported as “Test for *Entamoeba histolytica*” –either positive or negative. Testing is done by PCR. If the result is negative for *E. histolytica*, a repeat specimen is not required, unlike traditional parasite microscopy.

If testing is positive for **E. histolytica**, even if asymptomatic, for adult cases please **consult with Infectious Disease** through Specialist Link for further management. For pediatric cases, Pediatric Infectious Diseases can be accessed by physicians via switchboard at ACH or via ROCA.