



Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
286 Water Street
11 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel: (207) 287-8016; Fax (207) 287-9058
TTY Users: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

Maine Health Alert Network (HAN) System

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

To: Health Care, Schools and Child Care, City and County Health, Service Organizations, State Offices, New England States

From: Dr. Siiri Bennett, State Epidemiologist

Subject: **Cryptosporidiosis Outbreak Linked to Raw Milk from Maine Farm**

Date / Time: Thursday, October 22, 2020 at 4:40PM

Pages: 2

Priority: Normal

Message ID: 2020PHADV033

Cryptosporidiosis Outbreak Linked to Raw Milk from Maine Farm

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) has identified an outbreak of cryptosporidiosis in individuals who consumed unpasteurized/raw milk from Roux Farm in Shapleigh, Maine, within the last two months. Epidemiologists identified at least four individuals who became ill and tested positive for cryptosporidiosis.

Anyone who consumed raw milk (regular or any flavor) from Roux Farm produced before October 18, 2020, may be at elevated risk of cryptosporidiosis. Raw milk from the farm was sold through a variety of stores in the state.

Background:

Cryptosporidium is a parasite that can infect both animals and humans. This organism can cause watery diarrhea, abdominal pain, dehydration, nausea, vomiting, fever, and weight loss. Cryptosporidiosis can be found in soil, water, food, or on surfaces. Symptoms of cryptosporidiosis usually start two to ten days (average of seven days) after becoming infected. Symptom duration can range from a few days to four or more weeks. Some infected people do not display any symptoms.

Risk factors for cryptosporidiosis include contact with sick animals, drinking untreated or contaminated water, ice, or beverages, eating undercooked food, consuming unpasteurized dairy products, or drinking unpasteurized cider.

Infected immunocompromised individuals may develop serious, chronic, and sometimes fatal illness. Most people with healthy immune systems do not need treatment and will recover without medication, but treatment may help reduce symptom duration. It is important to advise the patient to drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.

Raw milk is milk that has not been pasteurized to kill harmful bacteria. Raw milk and raw milk products can cause serious illnesses including cryptosporidiosis. The risk of getting sick from drinking contaminated raw milk is greater for infants and young children, older adults, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems, such as people with cancer, an organ transplant, or HIV.

Recommendations for Providers:

Health care providers who have patients with symptoms consistent with cryptosporidiosis should collect specimens for testing for cryptosporidiosis in addition to other enteric diseases. Providers should ask about recent consumption of raw milk as part of their evaluation.

Providers are encouraged to send specimens to Maine’s Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory (HETL) for testing and confirmation. Laboratory submission information for sending specimens can be found at:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/public-health-systems/health-and-environmental-testing/micro/documents/Detection-of-Cryptosporidium-by-Real-Time-PCR-LSIS.docx>

Reporting:

All cases of suspected and confirmed cryptosporidiosis should be reported to Maine CDC by electronic laboratory reporting, faxing to 1-800-293-7534, or calling the 24/7 disease reporting and consultation line at 1-800-821-5821.

For More Information:

- Maine CDC Cryptosporidiosis website: www.maine.gov/dhhs/crypto
- HETL Information on Submitting Samples: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/public-health-systems/health-and-environmental-testing/micro/submitting-samples.shtml>
- U.S. CDC Cryptosporidiosis website: <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/crypto/index.html>
- U.S. CDC Raw Milk website: <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/rawmilk/raw-milk-index.html>