

Animal Surveillance Case Definition

***Escherichia coli* shiga toxin producing strains (STEC) only**

Clinical description

A communicable disease of animals and people caused by Gram-negative bacillus bacteria, *Escherichia coli* shiga toxin producing strains (STEC). *E. coli* serotypes, particularly O157:H5, secrete Shiga toxins that produce hemorrhagic colitis. Domestic livestock, including cattle, sheep and horses can become infected with STEC. Canine and feline infections are infrequent, but may result from ingestion of contaminated food or water. Clinical infections in dogs and cats may be characterized by diarrhea (with or without blood), fever, anorexia, and vomiting, sometimes progressing to septicemia. The usual interval between exposure and onset of illness ranges from 2 to 10 days. STEC that cause human illness generally do not cause illness in livestock. Human infections are usually caused by ingestion of contaminated food (such as under-cooked ground beef) and water, unpasteurized milk/milk products, and contact with livestock or livestock manure; but humans may be infected from direct contact with pets, their feces, or contaminated pet food.

Case classification

Confirmed

+/- compatible clinical signs **and**

- Isolation of STEC from a clinical specimen by culture, usually of feces.

Suspect

- A clinically compatible case that is epidemiologically linked to a confirmed case.