

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
2012- PAHAN – 224-02-02- ADV
CAMPYLOBACTER OUTBREAK ASSOCIATED WITH RAW MILK
FROM LARGE DAIRY IN FRANKLIN COUNTY



DATE:	Feb. 2, 2012
TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Eli N. Avila, MD, JD, MPH, FCLM Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	Campylobacter Outbreak Associated with Raw Milk from a Large Dairy in Franklin County
DISTRIBUTION:	Statewide
LOCATION:	
STREET ADDRESS:	
COUNTY:	
MUNICIPALITY:	
ZIP CODE:	

This transmission is a “Health Advisory” provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH) continues to investigate an outbreak of *Campylobacter* infections among persons who consumed raw milk from The Family Cow dairy located in Franklin County near Chambersburg, Pa.. The outbreak was identified on Jan. 26 when illness was recognized in two separate families. As of Feb. 1, a total of 23 confirmed and 12 probable cases of *Campylobacter* infections, including at least seven hospitalizations, have been reported. Most cases are in south central PA and adjacent areas of Maryland. However, cases have also been reported from both southwestern PA and the Philadelphia area.

Although the implicated dairy ceased production and distribution of raw milk on Jan. 26, milk from the dairy produced before this date was distributed throughout the state. In these locations it is sold at drop spots and also handled by retail establishments. Therefore, PADOH requests that providers throughout the state consider the possibility of *Campylobacter* infections in persons presenting with acute diarrheal illness, and inquire about raw milk consumption in such persons. Any suspected or confirmed cases of *Campylobacter* infection should be promptly reported to your local health department or the Pennsylvania Department of Health so that further investigations can be conducted to identify the source of infection, characterize the scale and duration of the current outbreak, and possibly obtain additional milk samples from ill patients to test for the presence of the organism.

Campylobacteriosis can cause mild or severe diarrhea, often with fever, abdominal cramping and blood in the stool. The incubation period can range from 1-10 days post-exposure, but is most often 2-5 days. *Campylobacter* infection can lead to complications such as Guillan-Barre Syndrome, a serious neurological condition, or reactive arthritis. Most clinical laboratories routinely test submitted stool specimens for *Campylobacter*. Any questions about appropriate test methods for *Campylobacter* or how isolates can be submitted to the state laboratory for further characterization should be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of Health’s Bureau of Laboratories, 610-280-3464.

Most *Campylobacter* infections are foodborne, often from contaminated poultry, but many outbreaks have

been associated with raw milk. Among the seven raw milk-associated diarrheal disease outbreaks identified in Pennsylvania since 2007, *Campylobacter* was the cause of all but one. *Campylobacter* can also be easily transmitted from person-to-person, especially among young children in child care settings and their caregivers. Care should be taken when handling and disposing of soiled items such as diapers. Food handlers, children in day care and health care workers should not work while symptomatic with diarrhea and must obtain the approval of local or state health department before returning to their routine activities.

Suspected cases should be reported to your local health department or to the Pennsylvania Department of Health at 1-877-PA-HEALTH (877-724-3258). Questions can also be directed to the Bureau of Epidemiology at 717-787-3350.

Communicable Diseases Fact Sheets: Campylobacteriosis

<http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=18&objID=1066322&mode=2>

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

This information is current as of Feb. 2, 2012 but may be modified in the future.