

E. coli Outbreak Likely to be Related to Pre-packaged Fresh Spinach

Recorded Information Line – 09/15/06

The Food and Drug Administration is issuing an alert to consumers about an outbreak in multiple states that may be associated with the consumption of produce. New York State has not reported any cases related to this outbreak at this time.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, preliminary findings indicate that pre-packaged fresh spinach is the most likely source. The Food and Drug Administration advises that consumers do not eat bagged fresh spinach at this time.

E. coli bacteria causes diarrhea that is often bloody and accompanied by abdominal cramps. Fever is generally absent or mild. The illness typically resolves within a week, but some people, especially young children and the elderly, can develop a form of kidney failure called hemolytic uremic syndrome.

There is no cause for alarm if you have recently eaten pre-packaged fresh spinach. However if you develop severe diarrhea, especially if it is bloody, contact your primary care provider. Symptoms usually start about 3 – 4 days after exposure to E. coli, but can occur from 2 – 10 days after exposure.

If you have any further questions, please contact your primary care provider or the Broome County Health Department communicable disease nurse at 778-2839.