



Stay Safe Around Animals

Summer provides a great opportunity for visiting the local petting zoo or enjoying the animals at the Berrien County Youth Fair. However, it is important to remember that animals carry germs that can be harmful to humans if precautions are not taken to stay safe.

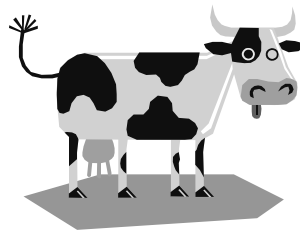
E. coli is a naturally occurring bacteria found in the intestines of humans, chickens, deer, sheep, and pigs. Most strains of E. coli are harmless, however, E. coli O157:H7 produces a poison that has the ability to cause severe illness. An E. coli O157:H7 infection includes symptoms like bloody diarrhea and stomach-

cramps with little or no fever. Symptoms usually last for 5-10 days. In 2-7% of E. coli O157:H7 infections, something called hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS) develops. HUS causes red blood cell destruction and eventually leads to kidney failure. Children under five and the elderly are at highest risk for this complication.

There are several ways someone could be exposed to E. coli. Meat can become contaminated during the slaughtering process; bacteria present on a cow's udders can get into raw milk; transmission can occur by swimming in or drinking sewage-contaminated water; and it

can be passed from person-to-person if proper hand washing techniques are not used.

Exposure to E. coli in a fair setting could occur several ways. People may be exposed by petting, touching, or feeding the animals because animal bedding is often contaminated with manure. Those who come in contact with the animals may have contaminated clothing and shoes because the barn flooring and barriers may also be contaminated with manure. This could lead to contamination of food if proper hand washing is not practiced after contact with animals. **WASH YOUR HANDS!**



Berrien County Health Department:

Preventing Disease, Prolonging Life and Protecting the Health of the Community.



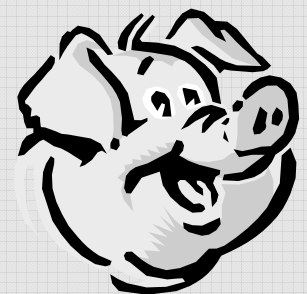
Welcome to August!

Although August marks the end of summer break for students, there is still much fun to be had! The Berrien County Health Department wants you to stay safe as you enjoy the end of summer, and get prepared for school. This month we will provide you with information on E. coli and outbreaks, immunization, hearing and vision screening, head lice, healthy eating and physical activity. For more information on any of these topics, please call the Berrien County Health Department at 269-926-7121. Happy Summer!

HAVE THERE BEEN OUTBREAKS AT OTHER FAIRS?

Fortunately, there has never been an outbreak associated with the animals at the Berrien County Youth Fair. Fair officials take the proper precautions to protect everyone that comes to enjoy the fair. They even provide additional hand washing stations throughout the grounds to remind everyone that hand washing is the single most important step in preventing infection.

There have been outbreaks throughout the country involving contact with animals at fairs. Fifteen children developed hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS) after visiting a petting zoo at the North Carolina State Fair. The North Carolina Division of Public Health identified 108 persons who became ill with onset after fair attendance and no other cause. 78% of these cases reported visiting the petting zoo, and environmental isolates confirmed presence of E. coli O157:H7. The behaviors that were associated with highest risk for illness were touching or stepping in manure, falling/sitting on the ground, and using a pacifier, a spill-proof cup, or sucking one's thumb. They found that using alcohol sanitizers was not protective against infection. Since 2001, 35 zoonotic outbreaks have been reported to the CDC.



Things to Remember to Prevent Illness Around Animals:

- Avoid eating, drinking, or smoking in designated animal areas
- Avoid feeding the animals
- Avoid contact with animal bedding
- Supervise children to avoid hand-to-mouth behaviors like thumb sucking
- Avoid using toys, pacifiers, spill-proof cups, and bottles
- Wash your hands
- HAVE FUN!!!!

Hand Washing Is Important

Germ Farm



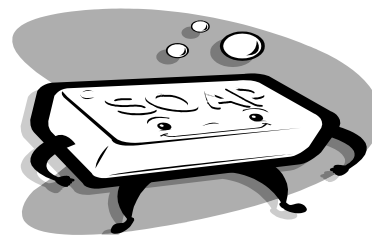
Scrub'em!
www.1st-in-handwashing.com

Directions for Hand Washing

1. Wet hands with running water (preferably warm)
2. Place soap into palms
3. Rub together to make a lather
4. Scrub hands vigorously for 20 seconds
5. Rinse soap off of hands
6. Dry hands with disposable paper towels, not on clothing

When Should I Wash My Hands??

- After going to the bathroom
- Upon exiting animal areas
- Before eating
- Before preparing foods
- After removing soiled clothing or shoes



The Berrien County Health Department has five locations to serve you:

| Benton Harbor | M-139 Office | School Based | Niles | Three Oaks |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------|------------|
| 769 Pipestone | M-139 Office | School Based | 1205 N. Front St. | 21 N. Elm |
| P.O. Box 706 | 2106 S. M-139 | 870 Colfax Ave | 684-2800 | 756-2008 |
| 926-7121 | 927-5623 | 925-4500 | | |

Or visit us on the web at www.berriencohlthdept.org

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