

**THIS IS AN OFFICIAL WEST VIRGINIA HEALTH ALERT NUMBER WV0034-10-07-01**  
Distributed via the WV Health Alert Network – July 1, 2010

 <p>West Virginia Bureau for Public Health Department of Health &amp; Human Resources</p> <p>Your Health Your Safety Our Purpose</p>	<h1>HEALTH ALERT</h1> <h2>(34)</h2>
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### **FOODBORNE ILLNESS SEASON ALERT, 2010**

**TO: All West Virginia Healthcare Providers**

**FROM: Catherine C. Slemp, MD, MPH, Acting State Health Officer  
WVDHHR, Bureau for Public Health**

**LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS, EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS AND EMERGENCY CARE CENTERS**

**OTHER RECIPIENTS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO APPROPRIATE STAFF AS APPLICABLE**

**DATE: July 1, 2010**

Every summer, West Virginia experiences an increase in foodborne illness cases. Providers should be on heightened alert and obtain a stool specimen from patients presenting with diarrhea for more than 24 hours or diarrhea accompanied by fever or other signs of severe illness (e.g. dehydration, bloody stool). Lab results are critical to guide proper treatment of patients. The table below outlines treatment considerations for some common bacterial pathogens and illustrates the importance of laboratory findings for safe and effective patient management. Complete IDSA guidelines for management of infectious diarrhea can be found at <http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/318514>

Selected Pathogens	Therapy Considerations
<i>Campylobacter</i> species	Erythromycin or Azithromycin can shorten duration
<i>Escherichia coli</i> Enterohemorrhagic (STEC)	Antibiotic treatment <b>NOT</b> recommended because of increased risk of hemolytic uremic syndrome. Avoid antimotility drugs.
Non- <i>typhi</i> species of <i>Salmonella</i>	Antibiotics may prolong bacterial carriage. Ampicillin, Amoxicillin or TMP-SMZ are recommended only for cases at high risk for invasive disease or complications
<i>Shigella</i> species	Ampicillin or TMP-SMZ useful for shortening duration of symptoms and shedding

Laboratory diagnosis also facilitates identification of foodborne outbreaks and is critical to assuring a safe food supply. For more information about infectious diseases (including foodborne illnesses) in West Virginia, please visit <http://www.wvidep.org>. You may also contact the local health department ([http://www.wvdhhr.org/wvlocalhealth/lhd\\_profiles/lhdreport/index.asp](http://www.wvdhhr.org/wvlocalhealth/lhd_profiles/lhdreport/index.asp)) or call the Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology toll-free in West Virginia at (800)423-1271.

This message was directly distributed by the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health to Local Health Departments and other key stakeholders. Receiving entities are responsible for further disseminating the information as appropriate to the target audience.

**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.