

September 8, 2025

To: AHS Physicians and Primary Care Providers

From: Calgary Zone Medical Officers of Health

Re: Update to asymptomatic testing process for Saskatoon Farms

**As an update to our earlier communication sent out in July, please note that asymptomatic stool kits are no longer available for pick up from Provlab as of September 10, 2025. If a patient presents to you requesting asymptomatic screening after September 10, please follow the instructions for 'asymptomatic individuals' below.**

A gastrointestinal (GI) outbreak was declared at Saskatoon Farms (#20 80181 338 Ave E, Foothills County, AB) on July 21, 2025. The pathogens identified and linked to the outbreak are *Enteroinvasive Escherichia coli* (EIEC) and *Entamoeba histolytica*.

Individuals who **visited Saskatoon Farms between July 1 to 18 and consumed food or beverages or water at the restaurant are recommended to complete a stool parasite screen**. For those who have reported an exposure, Public Health is working to add this exposure to the problem list in Connect Care for consideration as part of a differential diagnosis in the event of a future presentation.

*Entamoeba histolytica* is a parasite and a notifiable disease which can cause amoebiasis. The incubation period for amoebiasis ranges from a few days to several months or years but most commonly two to four weeks. Due to the potential long-term extraintestinal manifestations of amoebiasis and asymptomatic carriage, all individuals who consumed food or beverages or water between July 1 to 18 (even if asymptomatic) are recommended to complete testing after July 30, even if they have had testing prior to this date.

## Recommendations:

- **Symptomatic individuals**
  - Clinically assess and use a [microbiology requisition \(https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/frm-20571.pdf\)](https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/frm-20571.pdf) for stool testing for **Bacterial Enteric Panel/Stool Culture and Stool Parasite Screen**;
    - Please include the **exposure investigation number (EI 2025-855)** in the **Clinical Information/Suspected Organism** section to link to the Saskatoon Farm outbreak.
  - Patients may pick up stool testing kits from their nearest lab or your office. If a full stool testing kit is not available a sterile container used for urine culture can be used.
  - Please ensure the stool collection container is clearly labelled with at least 2 patient identifiers, including the patient's full name and health care number if available.
- **Asymptomatic individuals**
  - Do not require clinical assessment.

- Please provide them with a [microbiology requisition \(https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/frm-20571.pdf\)](https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/frm-20571.pdf) for stool testing for **Stool Parasite Screen**;
  - Please include the **exposure investigation number (EI 2025-855)** in the **Clinical Information/Suspected Organism** section to link to the Saskatoon Farm outbreak.
- After receiving a requisition, patients can pick up stool testing kits from their nearest lab or your office (if you have them). If a full stool testing kit is not available, a sterile container used for urine culture can be used. Please ensure the stool collection container is clearly labelled with at least 2 patient identifiers, including the patient's full name.
- Only one sample is needed
- Note for you and your patient: uncommonly, people may only test positive and develop symptoms months to years after they are exposed (even if they have tested negative on this screen). The symptoms can be quite broad and rarely can cause severe illness. The condition is treatable even when it starts years after the exposure. In the future, please keep this in mind as part of your differential diagnosis if patients report having had an exposure to Saskatoon Farm during the exposure period (July 1-18)

## Results:

### *E. histolytica*

*E. histolytica* results will be reported as “Test for *Entamoeba histolytica*” –either positive or negative. Testing is done by PCR. If the result is negative for *E. histolytica*, a repeat specimen is not required, unlike traditional parasite microscopy.

If testing is positive for ***E. histolytica***, even if asymptomatic, for adult cases **please consult with Infectious Disease** through Specialist Link for further management. For pediatric cases, Pediatric Infectious Diseases can be accessed by physicians via switchboard at ACH or via ROCA.

### EIEC

The lab will report results as “Test for Shigella/Enteroinvasive *E. coli*” –either Positive or Negative. If someone was at Saskatoon Farms during the exposure period and tests positive, they are presumed to have EIEC based on this polymerase chain reaction (PCR) result and no additional testing is needed.

If testing is positive for **EIEC**, this is generally **self-limited** and can be managed with **supportive treatment**. **Antimicrobial therapy is generally not indicated** due to the self-limited nature of this disease, however, if severe please direct to emergency care if indicated. Antimicrobials may be considered in consultation with Infectious Disease specialists.