

HUSH NEWSLETTER

No Long-term Health Problems for Sufferers of E.coli 0157 Gastroenteritis

A recently published paper from the Department of Medicine at the University of Western Ontario in Canada indicates that although a quarter of children who survive diarrhoea-associated haemolytic uraemic syndrome develop long-term renal sequelae, the prognosis of self-limited E.coli O157 gastroenteritis had never been previously studied.

Following a drinking water outbreak 951 participants were identified - 313 were asymptomatic during the outbreak, 305 had moderate symptoms of acute gastroenteritis and 333 had severe symptoms that necessitated medical attention. The 23 children who developed HUS during the outbreak were excluded from the study.

The risk of high blood pressure, reduced kidney function and microalbuminuria was tested among the previously healthy children and adolescents. Four years later there was found to be no renal sequelae and the report recommends only those who develop HUS be followed up for long-term renal health.

"Absence of renal sequelae after childhood Escherichia coli O157:H7 gastroenteritis"
- Garg AX, Clark WF, Salvadori M, Thiessen-Philbrook HR, Matsell D

Nursery Learns the Importance of Good Handwashing

During the hustle and bustle of Christmas preparations, children at Auchinleck Nursery in Ayrshire spent time learning about germs. One of the HUSH lightboxes was used to improve hand washing technique

HUSH co-ordinator, Ishbel Mackinnon visited the nursery and spoke to parents about E.coli O157 and the steps that could be taken to protect their families against it. Ishbel was joined by HUSH member and nursery parent, Lorraine Clelland who gave a very moving account her personal experiences of E.coli.



Lorraine Clelland and her daughter Kaylee accept a cheque for HUSH from the children of Auchinleck Nursery

Both of Lorraine's daughters became infected with the O157 bacterium three years ago. Karla had just started school and was off for weeks, but 1½ year old Kaylee developed HUS and the family "nearly lost her". Lorraine believes the source of infection was a mince pie bought from a local shop and this has made her much more aware of what the family eat and how it is cooked.

The nursery children spent a week doing a sponsored handwash and raised £550 for HUSH and another £550 for nursery equipment.

LEADING THE FIGHT AGAINST E.COLI O157

HUSH AGM

New members and old met recently at Bilsborrow near Preston for the charity's Annual General Meeting.

Treasurer, Debbie Holden, advised that HUSH is approaching the end of a 3-year grant from the Department of Health to cover the charity's day-to-day expenses (ie. Printing, postage, telephone, etc.) The Scottish Executive will be covering the cost of the co-ordinator's salary until the end of March 2008. OSCR (Office of Scottish Charities Register) has confirmed acceptance of the HUSH annual report and accounts.

Founding member, Sharon Smith, gave a presentation outlining some of the charity's achievements over the years since it was formed in 1997. This included: The distribution of:

- 200,000	HUSH Leaflets	- 20,000	Safe BBQ posters
- 60,000	"Wash Your Hands" Posters	- 14,750	Fridge magnets

Thanks were extended to the many members of the charity who had fundraised over the years and to everyone who had given so much of their time and talents to raising awareness, responding to public consultations and offering support to families newly affected by E.coli.

Dr Kevin Pollock, Health Protection Scotland (HPS), was welcomed by HUSH Chairman, Paul Santoni, and gave an insight on his work on "ENSHURE" (Enhanced Surveillance of Haemolytic Uraemic Syndrome).

Between 2003 and 2006 there have been 159 cases recorded – 98 of HUS, 15 of TTP and 1 of TMA. The HUS cases were found to result from the following infections: 92 E.coli O157, 3 E.coli non-O157, 2 streptococcus pneumoniae and 1 parvovirus B19/MMR. Of the 97 cases of VTEC, 42 could not be linked to any specific source of transmission, 26 reported farm contact, 23 reported person-to-person spread, 3 reported food as a source of infection, 2 were linked to a private water supply and 1 was environmental (beach). Of the total 98 cases of HUS from the first year of the study, follow-up reports were received for 52. This identified that 7 had ongoing renal impairment, 4 were dialysis-dependent, 1 had neurological impairment and 1 died. Dr Pollock also discussed the psychological symptoms of parents – which included:

- ◇ Long-term emotional distress,
- ◇ Substantive disruption to daily life, and
- ◇ Fear of unknown long-term repercussions (relapse and re-infection cause distress and rumination).



Dr Kevin Pollock, Health Protection Scotland, answers questions

The use of NSAID's and antibiotics has been linked to more severe kidney disease and increased dialysis dependence. He mentioned his work with Dr Phillip Tarr at Washington University and his conclusion that it is clinically and financially worth hospitalising cases of E.coli O157 early for platelet monitoring and possible rehydration, rather than waiting until the condition develops into HUS. Dr Tarr believes "*bloody diarrhoea is a medical emergency*" and early use of a high saline drip may actually prevent cases of HUS.

Members around the table were asked to respond and Dr Pollock spent considerable time answering various questions and responding to the many points raised by those present.

Other resources recommended by Dr Pollock are:

- ◆ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi>
- ◆ http://peds.wustl.edu/research.labs/Tarr_Phillip/

A full copy of the presentations or copies of the minutes are available by contacting HUSH at the address below or telephoning freephone 0800 731 4679.

Research on ACE Inhibitors

A HUSH member kindly sent the following article from the MRJ as it may be of interest to others:

ACE inhibitors, drugs commonly used to treat high blood pressure (*but used extensively for those who have suffered from Haemolytic Uraemic Syndrome—HUS*) have been linked to birth defects if taken by the expectant mother during the first trimester of her pregnancy, according to a new study carried out by researchers at Vanderbilt University and Boston University.

Researchers gathered data from the medical records of 29,507 new-borns. 209 of their mothers had taken ACE inhibitors during the first trimester of pregnancy. 18 of them were born with birth defects, of which 9 had heart defects.

Expectant mothers taking ACE inhibitors during their first trimester were 2.7 times as likely to have a baby with a birth defect than mothers who did not take the drug during their first trimester.

The researchers say that any woman who is pregnant or planning to start a family should avoid taking ACE inhibitors. It is vital that all women of child-bearing age know about this, as well as their health care providers, so that alternative medications to treat hypertension can be identified.

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*Donations can be sent to above address or made via a secure internet site—www.justgiving.com/hush/donate/
(UK Taxpayers will be able to boost their donations by 28% at no extra cost to themselves on the website)*