

University of Calgary doctor shines light on severe E. coli infections in children ^[1]

Dr. Stephen Freedman hopes to follow 500 kids exposed during daycare outbreak

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AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

Excerpts

A University of Calgary doctor is working to raise awareness about shiga toxin-producing E. coli and delve into the long-term implications for children.

Dr. Stephen Freedman has been studying this type of E. coli for years and was on the front lines treating children in the recent daycare-related outbreak in the city.

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Previous research has focused on children who experience severe complications, including kidney failure, according to Freedman, who hopes to learn more about the implications for kids who experience mild infections

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Freedman is also the lead author of a review article on STEC published recently in the New England Journal of Medicine. The project was in the works for over two years.

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According to Freedman, roughly 60 per cent of shiga toxin-producing E. coli infections are the type that can cause serious complications.

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Dr. Sam Wong, president of the pediatrics section of the Alberta Medical Association, said the article will be helpful for physicians on the front lines.

"It nicely summarizes the current data on STEC bacteria, diagnostic testing, treatment options/management and potential pitfalls when caring for these patients," he said in an email.

According to Alberta Health Services, as of Oct. 13, there were 360 lab-confirmed cases connected to the Calgary daycare outbreak and 45 secondary cases.

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