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In the News




Featured in **Toronto Star**

"Raw milk saga heads back to court" January 25, 2009

Food Safety: Unpasteurized Milk: A Continued Public Health Threat

Jeffrey T. LeJeune and Päivi J. Rajala-Schultz

A review published earlier this month in the Journal of Clinical Infectious Diseases described raw milk as "a continued public health threat," and found no evidence that heating milk destroys its nutritional value. In the December issue of the American Academy of Pediatrics' newsmagazine, a panel of experts warned families against giving children unpasteurized milk, and cautioned that "raw milk has no benefit that would justify any increase in risk to children."



Featured in **Guardian**

"What treatments work for kidney infections?" January 21, 2009

Guidelines for Antimicrobial Treatment of Uncomplicated Acute Bacterial Cystitis and Acute Pyelonephritis in Women

John W. Warren, Elias Abrutyn, J. Richard Hebel, James R. Johnson, Anthony J. Schaeffer, and Walter E. Stamm

Antibiotics are the standard treatment for kidney infections. If you have an uncomplicated kidney infection and you're well enough not to need treatment in hospital, you'll be given antibiotic tablets

1 January 2009

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MAJOR ARTICLE

Babesia Infection through Blood Transfusions: Reports Received by the US Food and Drug Administration, 1997–2007

Diane M. Gubernot,¹ Charles T. Lucey,¹ Karen C. Lee,² Gilliam B. Conley,³ Leslie G. Holness,¹ and Robert P. Wise²

¹Office of Blood Research and Review, Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, US Food and Drug Administration, ²Office of Biostatistics and Epidemiology and US Public Health Service, and ³Office of Compliance and Biologic Quality, Rockville, Maryland

Background.

Human babesiosis is an illness with clinical manifestations that range from asymptomatic to fatal. Although babesiosis is not nationally notifiable, the US incidence appears to be increasing. *Babesia* infection is a transfusion-transmissible disease. An estimated 70 cases were reported during 1979–2007; most of these cases were reported during the past decade.

Methods.

We queried the 3 following US Food and Drug Administration safety surveillance systems to assess trends in babesiosis reporting since 1997: fatality reports for blood donors and transfusion recipients, the Adverse Event Reporting System (which includes MedWatch), and the Biological Product Deviations Reporting system. We analyzed fatality reports for time frames, clinical presentations, and patient and donor demographic characteristics.

Results.

Eight of 9 deaths due to transfusion-transmitted babesiosis that were reported since 1997 occurred within the past 3 years (2005–2007). Four implicated donors and 5 patients lived in areas where *Babesia* infection is not endemic. Increasing numbers of Biological Product Deviations Reports were submitted to the US Food and Drug Administration over the past decade; the Adverse Event Reporting System received no reports.

Conclusions.

After nearly a decade with no reported death due to transfusion-transmitted babesiosis, the US Food and Drug Administration received 8 reports from November 2005 onward. The increased numbers of deaths reported and Biological Product Deviations Reports suggest an increasing incidence of transfusion-transmitted babesiosis. Physicians should consider babesiosis in the differential diagnosis in immunocompromised, febrile patients with a history of recent transfusion, even in areas where *Babesia* infection is not endemic. Accurate and timely reporting of babesiosis-related donor and transfusion events assists the US Food and Drug Administration in developing appropriate public health-control measures.

Received 19 August 2008; accepted 1 October 2008; electronically published 26 November 2008.

Reprints or correspondence: Diane Gubernot, 1401 Rockville Pike, HFM-394, Rockville, MD 20852–1448 (diane.gubernot@fda.hhs.gov).

Data in this article are based on information provided to the US Food and Drug Administration in required reports of potentially transfusion-related deaths.

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Featured in **Guardian**

"What is Lyme disease?" January 21, 2009

The Clinical Assessment, Treatment, and Prevention of Lyme Disease, Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis, and Babesiosis: Clinical Practice Guidelines by the Infectious Diseases Society of America
Gary P. Wormser, Raymond J. Dattwyler, Eugene D. Shapiro, John J. Halperin, Allen C. Steere, Mark S. Klempner, Peter J. Krause, Johan S. Bakken, Franc Strle, Gerold Stanek, Linda Bockenstedt, Durland Fish, J. Stephen Dumler, and Robert B. Nadelman

If you work in or go walking in areas where there are ticks, then it is useful to know about the things you can do to prevent tick bites. [5] [6] For more information, see How to prevent tick bites.



Featured in **Reuters**

"Transfusion-acquired parasite infection up in U.S." January 19, 2009

Unpasteurized Milk: A Continued Public Health Threat

Jeffrey T. LeJeune and Päivi J. Rajala-Schultz

Doctors should consider babesiosis in immunocompromised patients fever with a history of recent transfusion, Dr. Diane M. Gubernot at the FDA in Rockville, Maryland, and colleagues advise in a report in the medical journal Clinical Infectious Diseases.



Featured in **Reuters**

"Dual HIV/TB infection common in S. African infants" December 29, 2008

#

High Incidence of Tuberculosis among HIV-Infected Infants: Evidence from a South African Population-Based Study Highlights the Need for Improved Tuberculosis Control Strategies

A. C. Hesseling, M. F. Cotton, T. Jennings, A. Whitelaw, L. F. Johnson, B. Eley, P. Roux, P. Godfrey-Faussett, and H. S. Schaaf

HIV-positive infants are over 20 times more likely to develop tuberculosis than their HIV-negative counterparts, researchers from South Africa report in the current issue of Clinical Infectious Diseases.



Featured in **Boston Globe**

"Raw milk poses threat, study says" December 19, 2008

Unpasteurized Milk: A Continued Public Health Threat

Jeffrey T. LeJeune, and Päivi J. Rajala-Schultz

Writing in the journal Clinical Infectious Diseases, scientists from the College of Veterinary Medicine in Columbus, Ohio, say that the average number of disease outbreaks per year associated with raw milk has more than doubled to 5.2 per year from 1993 through 2006 compared to the previous 19 years.

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