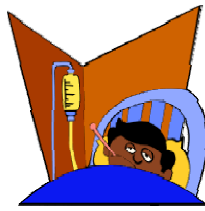
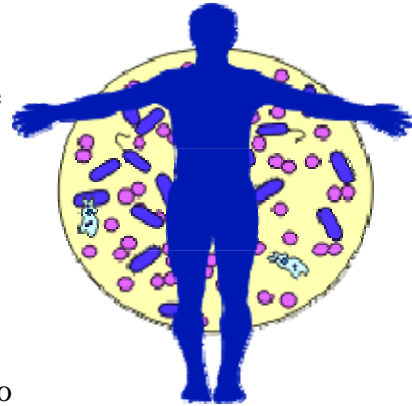


TOTAL AND FECAL COLIFORM BACTERIA

The coliform bacteria group consists of several genera of bacteria belonging to the family *enterobacteriaceae*.

These mostly harmless bacteria live in soil, water, and the digestive system of animals. Fecal coliform bacteria, which belong to this group, are present in large numbers in the feces and intestinal tracts of humans and other warm-blooded animals, and can enter water bodies from human and animal waste. If a large number of fecal coliform bacteria (over 200 colonies/100 milliliters (ml) of water sample) are found in water, it is possible that

pathogenic (disease- or illness-causing) organisms are also present in the water. Fecal coliform by themselves are usually* not pathogenic; they are indicator organisms, which means they may indicate the presence of other pathogenic bacteria. Pathogens are typically present in such small amounts it is impractical monitor them directly.



Swimming in waters with high levels of fecal coliform bacteria increases the chance of developing illness (fever, nausea or stomach cramps) from pathogens entering the body through the mouth, nose, ears, or cuts in the skin. Diseases and illnesses that can be contracted in water with high fecal coliform counts include typhoid fever, hepatitis, gastroenteritis, dysentery and ear infections. Fecal coliform, like other bacteria, can usually be killed by boiling water or by treating it with chlorine. Washing thoroughly with soap after contact with contaminated water can also help prevent infections.

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Source :

<http://bcn.boulder.co.us/basin/data/BACT/info/FColi.html>