

Victim of Raw Milk



Chris Martin, then age seven, developed an E. coli O157:H7 infection in September 2006 following consumption of **raw milk**. He was hospitalized beginning September, suffering from severe gastrointestinal symptoms. Shortly thereafter, he developed hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS). In an effort to properly treat his rapidly deteriorating condition, Chris was moved to multiple medical facilities, twice by life-flight. His HUS was remarkably severe, marked by prolonged renal failure, pancreatitis, and severe cardiac involvement. He required 18 days of renal replacement therapy. On two occasions his cardiac problems became so severe that he was placed on a ventilator. At several junctures, the possibility that he might not survive was very real. Ultimately he was hospitalized through November, after incurring over \$550,000 in medical bills. Renal experts have opined that Chris is likely to develop severe renal complications in the future. These complications include end stage renal disease (ESRD) and kidney transplant.

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Nicole Riggs developed an E. coli O157:H7 infection in May 2008 from consumption of **raw goat's milk**. She was nine years old at the time. Nicole suffered from symptoms typical of E. coli O157:H7 infections – bloody diarrhea, cramping, and nausea – that quickly intensified and led to her hospitalization. Once hospitalized, Nicole developed renal failure, anemia, and thrombocytopenia (low platelet count) indicating that she was developing HUS. She was transferred to a Children's hospital and started on dialysis in order to save her life. She received dialysis for 18 days. Nicole's renal function slowly returned to the point that she was deemed healthy enough for discharge on June 1. After discharge, she remained under the care of a nephrologist. In addition, damage suffered during her HUS has required that her gall bladder be removed. Medical costs to this point exceed \$180,000. As the result of damage to her kidneys suffered during her bout with HUS, Nicole is at significant risk for severe renal complications in the future.

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Mari Tardiff was one of those sickened in the June 2008 outbreak of *Campylobacter* connected to **raw milk**. As a result of her campylobacter infection, Mari developed Guillain Barré syndrome, or GBS, a potentially fatal inflammatory disorder. By the time she was hospitalized in mid June, Mari was essentially paralyzed. Mari was intubated and placed on mechanical ventilation. For weeks on end, Mari's condition remained unchanged. She was heavily sedated, unable to move, and entirely dependent on mechanical ventilation for survival. In August, there were indications of slight improvement, and the very slow process of weaning Mari off mechanical ventilation began. At the outset, it was not clear that the process was successful. Through incredible effort on Mari's part, she was fully weaned off mechanical ventilation by the end of August, and discharged to a rehabilitation facility. She spent more than two months at the rehabilitation facility diligently attempting to re-acquire the ability to speak, breathe, and move her arms and legs on her own. She was discharged home in November, still in need of essentially 24-hour care. Since that time, she has worked every day toward achieving her goal, as yet unreached, of walking again. Medical expenses to date exceed \$1,000,000.

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Larry Pedersen had just turned one year old when he developed an *E. coli* O157:H7 infection in May 2008 from drinking **unpasteurized goat milk**. When his diarrhea turned bloody, his parents took him for medical treatment. He was admitted to the hospital on May 8. Shortly thereafter, Larry developed hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS) and was transferred to a specialty care facility. As is typical of HUS, Larry was then suffering from acute renal failure. He was started on dialysis, which was necessary at that point for his survival. He required 15 days of dialysis before his kidneys recovered enough to function on their own. Larry was discharged on May 29, to continue recovery and treatment on an outpatient basis. The medical bills associated with his care approached \$90,000. As the result of damage to his kidneys suffered during his bout with HUS, Larry is at significant risk for severe renal complications in the future. These complications include end stage renal disease (ESRD) and kidney transplant.