

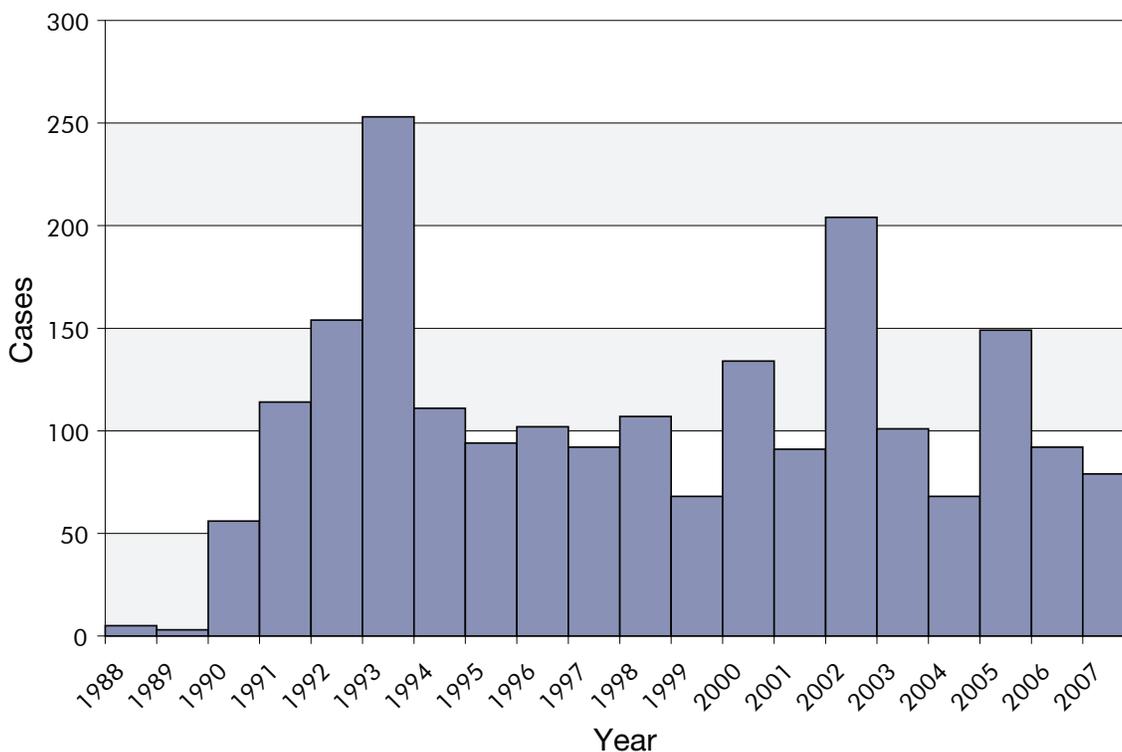
Escherichia coli O157 infection

E. coli O157 (O157) has become one of the most feared common causes of infectious diarrhea. Oregon has been the setting for many O157 outbreaks, and investigations of those outbreaks combined with the analysis of other surveillance information have contributed greatly to our understanding of this pathogen. Spread by the fecal-oral route, O157 has a number of animal reservoirs, the most important of which are ruminants, including cattle, goats, sheep, deer and elk. Transmission often occurs from consumption of contaminated food or water, as well as direct person-to-person spread.

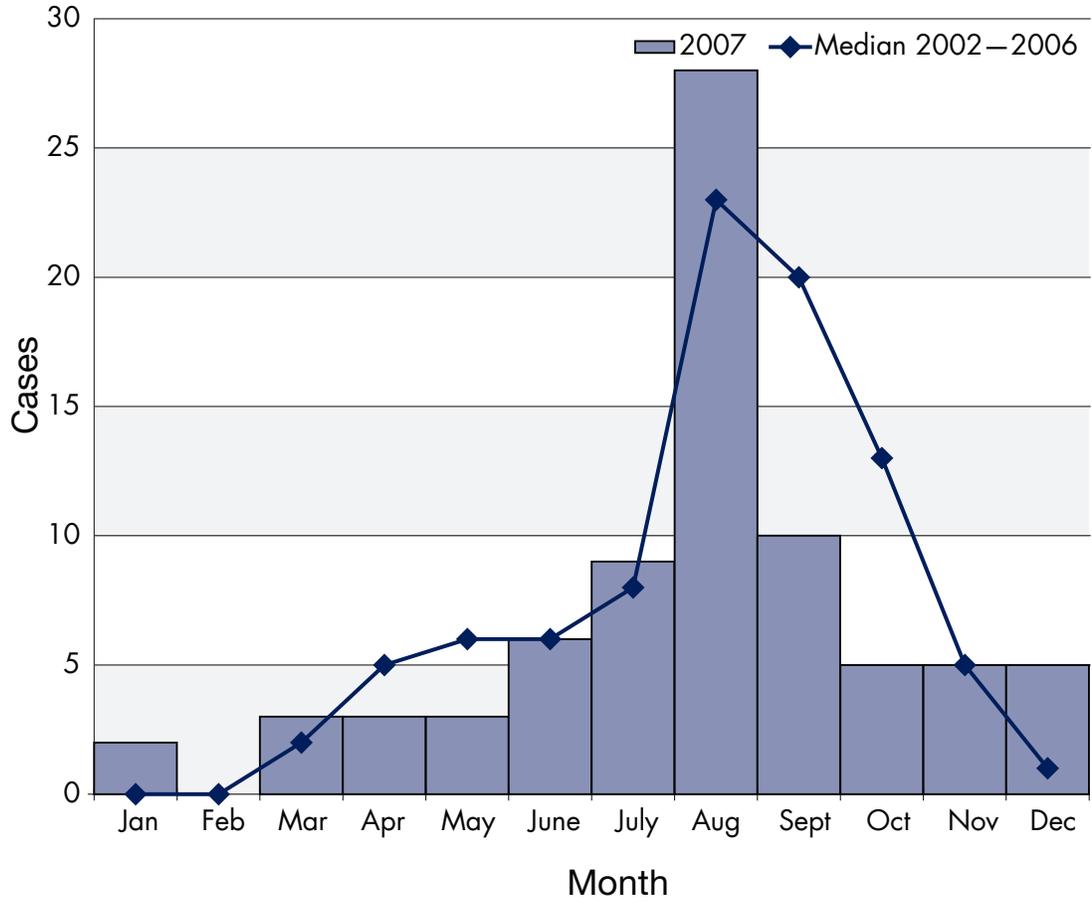
After a spike in 2005 of 149 cases, the yearly total fell back to a more typical 79 reports for 2007 — a phenomenon known as “regression to the mean.” Nationwide, however, reported case counts drifted upwards for the third year in a row.

We identified four O157 outbreaks in 2007. These included a small cluster at a Portland restaurant — specific source uncertain; another small cluster lingering from 2006 associated with visiting a county fairgrounds; another outbreak traced to a regional hamburger distributor; and a two-person blip among persons with a history of travel to Kauai. Summer sees more outbreaks of *E. coli* than other seasons.

E. coli O157 infection by year: Oregon, 1988–2007

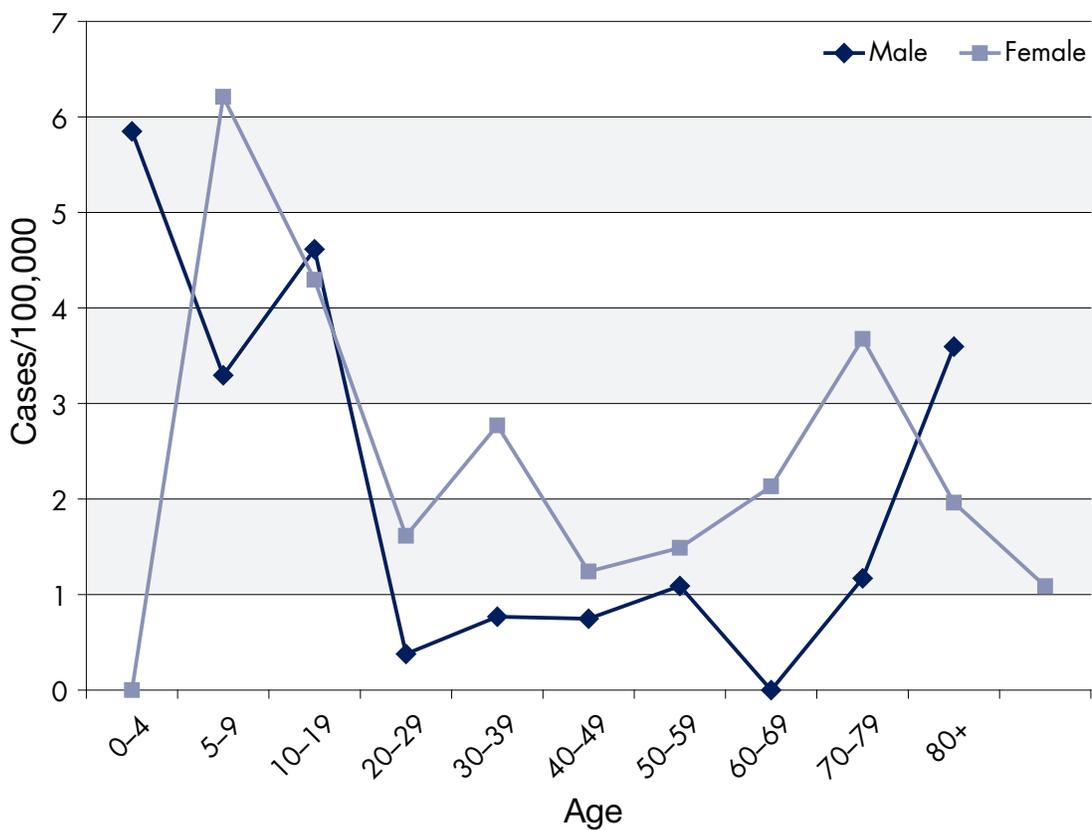


E. coli O157 infection by onset month: Oregon, 2007

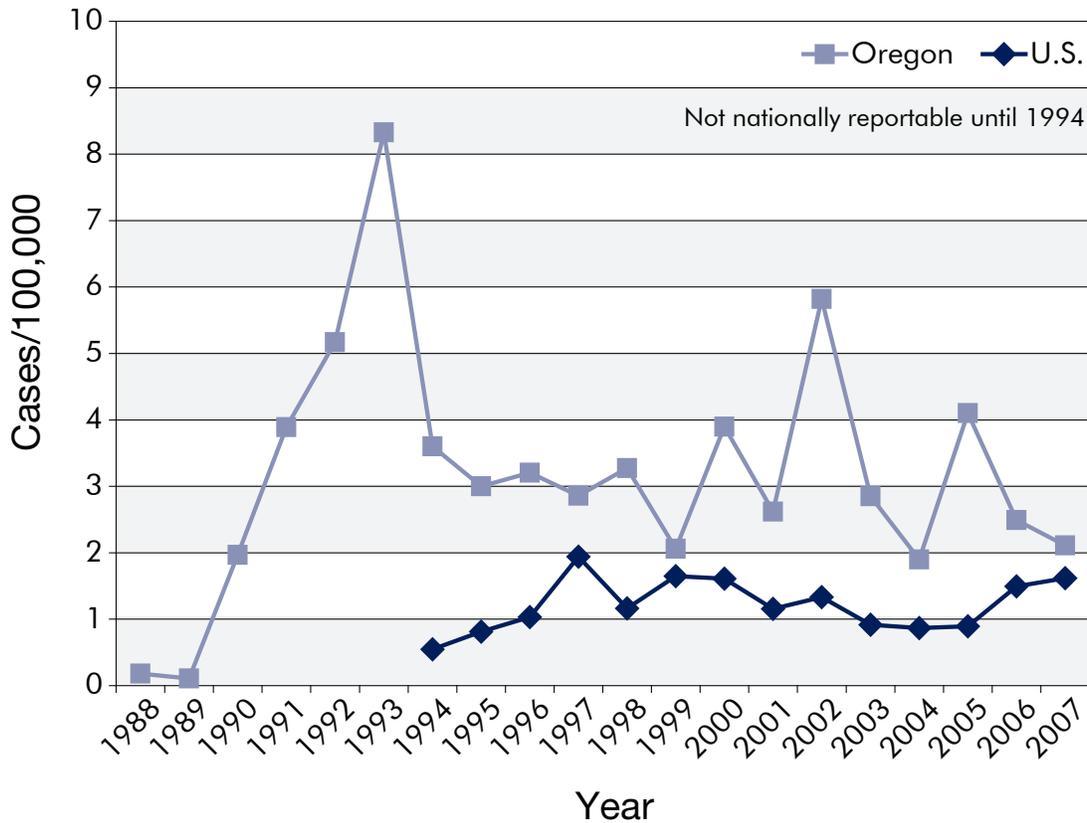


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Incidence of *E. coli* O157 infection by age and sex: Oregon, 2007



Incidence of *E. coli* O157 infection: Oregon vs. nationwide, 1988–2007



Incidence of *E. coli* O157 infection by county of residence: Oregon, 1998–2007

