Animal Associated Afflictions

Week of:
Apr 20, 2018

Geese feces health risks?

Dear Alice,

I have been frequently going to a public beach that is infested with Canada geese poop. It is everywhere! There are a lot of children and families also at this beach. I am wondering what the health risks are to children as well as to adults sitting and playing in this feces?

Avian flu? what is it? Is there a vaccine?

Dear Alice,

Is there any vaccine for avian flu? Any viral replication inhibitor? What would you suggest to buy?

Help! I was stung by a jellyfish!

Dear Alice,

I was at the beach about a week ago and got stung by a jellyfish about six times. It stung and hurt, but everything was healed up by the end of the day. However, just a few days ago, I got these very itchy pink bumps all over my leg, almost exactly where the bites were. The bumps seem to be mostly in straight lines and will not go away. Please help? the itchiness is driving me mad!
BSE (Mad cow disease) from gelatin?  

Dear Alice,

I would like to know if I should be concerned with the risk of contracting "bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)" or its human variant, from the use of vitamins, supplements, over-the-counter medication, or pills prescribed by a doctor which contain gelatin?

I understand that one of the main components of gelatin comes from the bones and skin of cows and that it is often imported from other countries. I also understand that it is highly unlikely that the standard processes involved in producing gelatin would ever remove or disable the BSE contamination.

It is also very alarming that BSE has a long incubation period (years) whereby the infected person has no symptoms. However, when symptoms do occur, the person dies a horrible death, via a deformed and shrinking brain, usually soon thereafter.

Since gelatin is used in so many food products, is it realistic to try avoiding all gelatin?

What are the mathematical chances of contracting the disease from gelatin in a food product?

Is there fewer gelatins in a standard hard pill as opposed to a "soft gel" capsule?

I feel the FDA, U.S. Government, and more importantly, the food and supplement industries, should do more to insure that all food products and supplements used in America are free from contamination of this horrible disease in order to prevent any chance of an outbreak like the one seen in Europe a few years ago.

I would appreciate your thoughts on this subject.

Thank you,
John

Campylobacteriosis: Attack of the meaty bacteria!

Dear Alice,

I may have not cooked my chicken thoroughly enough. I saw some raw chicken in the middle and I threw it away. I defrosted it and turned the chicken on all its sides in the frying pan. I saw something about camplobacteria or something. I'm a little scared because I ate some of the chicken, which I believe was cooked, but I don't know if I was exposed to raw chicken that I may have swallowed. I'd appreciate your advice.