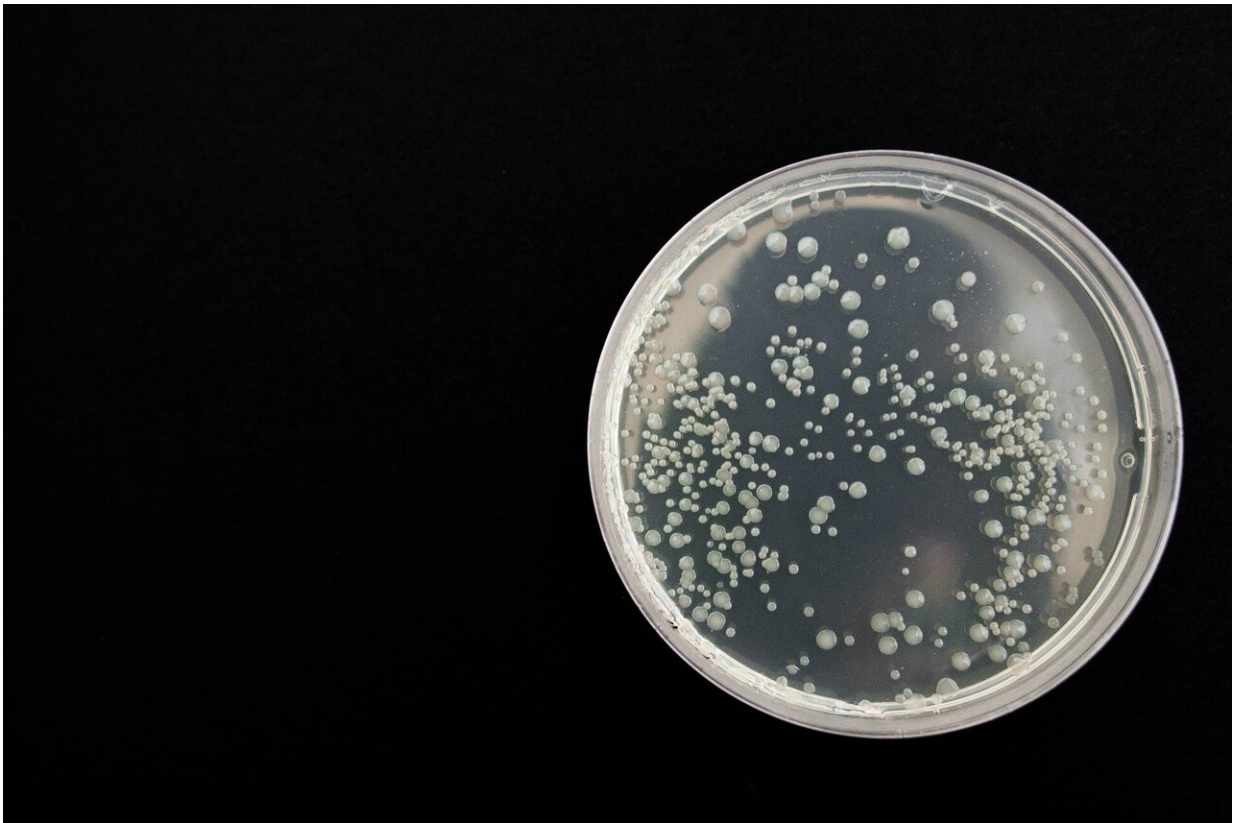


# What to know about the rise of flesh-eating bacteria cases

August 2 2022, by Morayo Ogunbayo

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Cases of flesh-eating bacteria, which refer to any tissue-destroying infection, rise in summer when more people are cooling off in bodies of water. The most common bacteria, vibrio, is often found in seawater and

has the potential to be deadly.

The infection can come from swimming in waters with high levels of bacteria or from eating raw shellfish. There are typically 20,000 cases in the United States every summer, and factors such as [climate change](#) have the potential to cause an increase, due to the melting of ice that may contain harmful bacteria. It is most common in East Coast bodies of water, but can occur anywhere.

The CDC estimates 80,000 cases each year, with 100 deaths. Vibrio thrives in [water temperatures](#) above 55 degrees, which are becoming more common due to climate change as well.

While this situation may seem scary, there are many precautions you can take to keep yourself safe. One of the most important is covering any open wounds before going into a body of water. For an immunocompromised person, it may be the best decision to avoid bodies of water if they have any cuts or scrapes. To prevent getting cuts or scrapes while in the water, it may be smart to wear water shoes or sandals.

The first signs of [vibrio](#) infection will be a concerning wound that quickly gets worse, as it reddens or spreads. This is usually followed by fever and dizziness. It is best to seek out [medical attention](#) at the first signs of infection, due to the illness's rapid rate of harm.

For some, vibrio infection can be cured with antibiotics and rest. For others, surgery may be required to remove the infected tissue.

While cases of vibrio infection are still uncommon, it is smart to take the right precautions and know the risks before your beach and lake days.

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