

Bacteria linked to illness at Montgomery day care identified

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MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) - A Montgomery day care center will remain closed while public health officials investigate an outbreak, suspected to be a foodborne illness, that left 86 children hospitalized earlier this week.

Public health officials on Thursday said the bacteria *Staphylococcus aureus* was found in samples of food served at Sunnyside Child Care Center's two locations, Mary McIntyre of the Alabama Department of Public Health said.

Staphylococcus aureus is known for causing food poisoning, skin infections and other medical issues. Children were admitted to local hospitals with vomiting, diarrhea, nausea, cramps and other symptoms Tuesday. Most of the children were between ages 1 and 4.

State health officer Don Williamson has said the food was likely served during an 11 a.m. lunch period and reports of sick children started coming in about 3 p.m. Foods the children were served included bologna, chicken and apples, Williamson said.

Food samples tested negative for norovirus and are being evaluated for other pathogens, McIntyre said. Public health officials are working with the day care's kitchen staff on food handling safety guidelines.

More than 300 children attend the two day care centers where the food was served, officials said. The day cares have been ordered to remain closed during an investigation and cleaning process.

SOURCE: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/25/bacteria-linked-to-illness-at-montgomery-day-care/>