

Outbreak of *Salmonella* Infections Linked to Tahini from Achdut Ltd.

Final Update



Food Safety Alert

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This outbreak appears to be over, but recalled tahini products have a long shelf life and may still be in people's homes. Consumers unaware of the recall could continue to eat these products and potentially get sick. Visit the FDA for a full list of recalled products.

CDC, public health and regulatory officials in several states, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) investigated a multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* Concord infections linked to tahini products produced by Achdut Ltd.

Advice to Consumers, Restaurants, and Retailers

At A Glance

- [Reported Cases](#): 8
 - [States](#): 4
 - Hospitalizations: 0
 - Deaths: 0
 - Recall: Yes
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- On November 27, 2018, Achdut Ltd. in Ari'el, Israel recalled tahini products because they might have been contaminated with *Salmonella*.
 - Do not eat, sell, or serve recalled tahini or products made with recalled tahini, such as hummus.
 - Recalled tahini products sold under the following brands have expiration dates of April 7, 2020 to May 21, 2020:
 - Achva

- Achdut
- Soom
- S&F
- Pepperwood brand tahini
- Soom brand Chocolate Sweet Tahini Halva Spread (lot code 071318CH)
 - Recalled Baron's brand tahini has an expiration date of May 5, 2021.
 - Recalled tahini products have lot codes ranging from 18-097 to 18-141. For a full list, visit the FDA website.
- Return any recalled tahini products to the store for a refund or throw them away. Throw out any food made with recalled tahini, such as hummus. Even if some tahini was eaten and no one got sick, do not eat it.
 - Some recalled products may not have dates or may have labels written in Hebrew. If you do not know whether the tahini product has been recalled, do not eat it and throw it away.
 - Wash and sanitize drawers or shelves in refrigerators where recalled tahini products were stored.
 - Wash containers that held foods made with recalled tahini with hot, soapy water or clean in the dishwasher.
- Retailers and restaurants should not use any of the recalled tahini manufactured by Achdut Ltd. at their establishments. Retailers and restaurants should throw the product out.
- Contact a healthcare provider if you think you got sick from eating recalled tahini products.

Final Outbreak Information

- As of February 27, 2019, this outbreak appears to be over.
- Eight people infected with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Concord were reported from four states.
 - Illnesses started on dates ranging from April 21, 2018 to January 3, 2019.
 - No hospitalizations or deaths were reported.
- [Epidemiologic and laboratory evidence](#) indicated that tahini products from Achdut Ltd. were the likely source of this outbreak.

- On November 27, 2018, Achdut Ltd. recalled tahini products because they might have been contaminated with *Salmonella*.

Symptoms of *Salmonella* Infection

- Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps 12 to 72 hours after being exposed to the bacteria.
- The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days, and most people recover without treatment.
- In some people, the diarrhea may be so severe that the patient needs to be hospitalized. *Salmonella* infection may spread from the intestines to the bloodstream and then to other places in the body.
- Children younger than 5 years, adults older than 65 years, and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to have a severe illness.

Investigation Details

February 27, 2019

CDC, public health and regulatory officials in several states, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) investigated a multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* Concord infections.

Public health investigators used the [PulseNet](#) system to identify illnesses that may have been part of this outbreak. PulseNet is the national subtyping network of public health and food regulatory agency laboratories coordinated by CDC. DNA fingerprinting is performed on *Salmonella* bacteria isolated from ill people by using techniques called [pulsed-field gel electrophoresis](#) (PFGE) and [whole genome sequencing](#) (WGS). CDC PulseNet manages a national database of these DNA fingerprints to identify possible outbreaks. WGS gives a more detailed DNA fingerprint than PFGE. WGS performed on bacteria isolated from ill people showed that they were closely related genetically. This means that people in this outbreak were more likely to share a common source of infection.

As of February 27, 2019, eight people infected with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Concord were reported from four states.

Illnesses started on dates ranging from [April 21, 2018 to January 3, 2019](#). Ill people ranged in age from 14 to 52 years, with a median age of 29. Sixty-

three percent of ill people were male. No hospitalizations or deaths were reported.

Whole genome sequencing analysis did not predict any antibiotic resistance in *Salmonella* bacteria isolated from seven ill people and four food specimens. Testing of three clinical isolates using standard [antibiotic susceptibility testing](#) methods by CDC's [National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System \(NARMS\)](#) confirmed these results.

Investigation of the Outbreak

[Epidemiologic and laboratory evidence](#) indicated that tahini products from Achdut Ltd. were the likely source of this outbreak.

In interviews, ill people answered [questions about the foods they ate and other exposures](#) in the week before they became ill. Of eight people interviewed, six (75%) reported eating or most likely eating tahini or hummus made with tahini. Four ill people ate tahini or hummus made with tahini in Hawaii and New York. Two ill people traveled to other countries where they ate tahini or hummus made with tahini.

Investigators with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene collected records and food samples at a restaurant where ill people ate. The outbreak strain was isolated in samples of tahini. Records indicated that the tahini used at the restaurant was Achva brand tahini manufactured by Achdut Ltd.

FDA identified *Salmonella* Concord in a sample of tahini collected at the point of import. The tahini was Baron's brand manufactured by Achdut Ltd.

Whole genome sequencing results showed that the *Salmonella* strain identified in imported tahini was closely related genetically to the *Salmonella* strain identified in ill people and from tahini samples collected at a restaurant where ill people ate. These results provide more evidence that people in this outbreak got sick from eating tahini products from Achdut Ltd.

On November 27, 2018, Achdut Ltd. recalled tahini products because they might have been contaminated with *Salmonella*. The FDA website has a list of the tahini products that were recalled.

As of February 27, 2019, this outbreak appears to be over.