

Outbreak of *Salmonella* Infections Linked to Cut Fruit

Final Update



Food Safety Alert

Published on February 18, 2020 at 2:30 PM ET

This outbreak appears to be over. CDC recommends that consumers, restaurants, and retailers choose and handle fruit safely to help prevent foodborne illness. Wash hands and food preparation surfaces before and after handling fruit. Refrigerate cut fruit at 40°F or colder.

CDC, public health, and regulatory officials in several states, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) investigated a multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* Javiana infections linked to cut fruit produced by Tailor Cut Produce.

Advice to Consumers, Restaurants, and Retailers

At A Glance

- [Reported Cases](#): 165
- [States](#): 14
- Hospitalizations: 73
- Deaths: 0
- Recall: Yes

CDC recommends that consumers, restaurants, and retailers always choose and handle fruit safely to help prevent foodborne illness.

- **Throw away** fruit that is spoiled or has been recalled.
- **Wash your hands**, kitchen utensils, and food preparation surfaces, including cutting boards and countertops, before and after handling fruit.
- **Wash** fruit before eating, cutting, or cooking.

- Wash or scrub fruit under running water—even if you do not plan to eat the peel—so dirt and germs on the surface do not get inside when you cut.
- **Separate** fruit from other foods that could contaminate it, such as raw meat and seafood.
- **Refrigerate** fruit that you have cut up, peeled, or cooked within 2 hours. Refrigerate within 1 hour if the temperature outside is above 90°F. Chill it at 40°F or below in a clean container.

Final Outbreak Information

- As of February 18, 2020, this outbreak appears to be over.
- 165 people infected with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Javiana were reported from 14 states.
 - Illnesses started on dates ranging from November 7, 2019 to January 11, 2020.
 - 73 hospitalizations were reported. No deaths were reported.
- Epidemiologic and traceback evidence indicated that cut fruit produced by Tailor Cut Produce of North Brunswick, New Jersey, was a likely source of this outbreak.
- On December 7, 2019, Tailor Cut Produce recalled its Fruit Lu au cut fruit mix as well as cut honeydew melon, cut cantaloupe, and cut pineapple products because they had the potential to be contaminated with *Salmonella* bacteria.

Symptoms of *Salmonella* Infection

- Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps 6 hours to 6 days after being exposed to the bacteria.
- The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days, and most people recover without treatment.
- In some people, the illness 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 65 and older, and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to have severe illness.

Final Investigation Details

February 18, 2020

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

Public health investigators used the [PulseNet](#) system to identify illnesses that were 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 a standardized laboratory and data analysis method called [whole genome sequencing](#) (WGS). CDC PulseNet manages a national database of these sequences that are used to identify possible outbreaks. WGS gives investigators detailed information about the bacteria causing illness. In this investigation, WGS showed that bacteria isolated from ill people were closely related genetically. This means that people in this outbreak were likely to share a common source of infection.

As of February 14, 2020, a total of 165 people infected with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Javiana were reported from 14 states. Illnesses were reported from states where Tailor Cut Produce distributed cut fruit, including Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. Most ill people from the other 10 states reported traveling to at least one of these 4 states in the week before their illness started. A list of the states and the number of cases in each can be found on the [Map of Reported Cases page](#).

Illnesses started on dates ranging from [November 7, 2019 to January 11, 2020](#). Ill people ranged in age from less than 1 to 92 years, with a median age of 44. Fifty-three percent of ill people were female. Of 111 ill people with information available, 73 were hospitalized. No deaths were reported.

WGS analysis did not identify antibiotic resistance in bacteria isolated from 150 ill people. Testing of two outbreak isolates using standard [antibiotic susceptibility testing](#) methods by CDC's [National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System \(NARMS\)](#) showed resistance to streptomycin in one isolate. This resistance did not affect the choice of antibiotic used to treat most people.

Investigation of the Outbreak

[Epidemiologic and traceback evidence](#) indicated that cut fruit, including honeydew melon, cantaloupe, pineapple, and grapes produced by Tailor Cut Produce of North Brunswick, New Jersey, was a likely source of this outbreak.

State and local public health officials interviewed ill people to determine what they ate and other exposures in the week before their illness started. Fifty-eight (94%) of 62 ill people reported eating cut fruit. Most ill people reported eating cut fruit served in long-term care facilities, hospitals, hotels, or schools. Several ill people reported purchasing cut fruit from multiple locations of a grocery store chain.

State health officials collected records from the locations where ill people ate or purchased the cut fruit and determined that these locations served or sold cut fruit from Tailor Cut Produce. On December 7, 2019, Tailor Cut Produce recalled its Fruit Luau cut fruit mix and cut honeydew melon, cut cantaloupe, and cut pineapple.

FDA's investigational activities including an inspection of the Tailor Cut Produce facility in New Jersey, are complete. FDA worked with CDC and state partners to trace back the cut fruit and learn more about the potential routes of contamination. Tailor Cut Produce was identified as the common processor, but the source of the contamination was not identified.

As of February 18, 2020, this outbreak appears to be over.