

Outbreak of *Salmonella* Infections Linked to Karawan brand Tahini

Final Update



Food Safety Alert

June 26, 2019 at 2:30 PM ET

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 website for a full list of recalled products.

CDC, public health and regulatory officials in several states, and the US Food and Drug Administration investigated a multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* infections linked to Karawan brand tahini imported from Israel.

Advice to Consumers, Restaurants, and Retailers

At A Glance

- [Reported Cases](#): 6
- [States](#): 3
- Hospitalizations: 1
- Deaths: 0
- Recall: Yes



- Do not eat, sell, or serve recalled tahini that is labeled as Karawan Tahini, El-Karawan Tahini, or SoCo Tahini. Do not eat, sell, or serve products made with this tahini, such as hummus.
- On June 10, 2019, Brodt Zenatti Holdings LLC of Jupiter, Fla., recalled bulk Karawan brand tahini sold in 3 kg (106-ounce) buckets.
- On May 20, 2019, Brodt Zenatti Holding LLC of Jupiter, Fla. recalled SoCo Brand tahini.
- On May 15 2019, Brodt Zenatti Holding LLC of Jupiter, Fla., recalled , Karawan brand tahini because it might be contaminated with *Salmonella*. This recall was expanded on May 17, 2019.
- Retailers and restaurants should not use recalled Karawan or SoCo brand tahini products. Retailers and restaurants should throw the product out and sanitize any surfaces that may have come in contact with recalled tahini or products made with recalled tahini.
- Consumers should not eat recalled Karawan or SoCo brand tahini products. Throw them away.
 - Throw out any food you made with recalled Karawan or SoCo brand tahini. Even if some recalled tahini was eaten and no one got sick, do not eat it.
 - Wash containers that held foods made with recalled tahini with hot, soapy water or clean in the dishwasher.
 - Wash surfaces that came into contact with recalled tahini with hot, soapy water.
- Contact a healthcare provider if you think you got sick from eating recalled tahini products.

Final Outbreak Information

- As of June 26, 2019, this outbreak appears to be over.
- A total of 6 people infected with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Concord were reported from 3 states.
 - Illnesses started on dates ranging from March 9, 2019, to May 2, 2019.
 - One hospitalization and no deaths were reported.

- Epidemiologic, traceback and laboratory evidence indicated that Karawan brand tahini products were the likely source of this outbreak.
- Do not eat, sell, or serve recalled tahini that is labeled as Karawan Tahini, El-Karawan Tahini, or SoCo Tahini. Do not eat, sell, or serve products made with recalled tahini, such as hummus.
- This outbreak was not related to another recent multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* Concord infections linked to tahini. Ill people in the previous outbreak were infected with a different outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Concord.

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 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 older than 65 years, and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to have a severe illness.

Investigation Details

June 26, 2019

CDC, public health and regulatory officials in several states, and the US 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 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 June 26, 2019, a total of 6 people infected with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Concord were reported from 3 states.

Illnesses started on dates ranging from March 9, 2019 to May 2, 2019. Ill people ranged in age from 8 to 33 years, with a median age of 21. Four of the 6 sick people (67%) were female. One hospitalization and no deaths were reported.

This outbreak was not related to another recent multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* Concord infections linked to tahini. People in the previous outbreak were infected with a different outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Concord

WGS testing of four clinical isolates and two food isolates did not predict resistance to any antibiotics. Testing of two outbreak isolates using standard [antibiotic susceptibility testing](#) by CDC's [National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System \(NARMS\)](#) laboratory also showed no resistance.

Investigation of the Outbreak

[Epidemiologic, traceback, and laboratory evidence](#) indicated that Karawan brand tahini products 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. Four (80%) of the 5 people interviewed reported eating tahini or hummus made with tahini.

Investigators with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene collected records and food samples at restaurants where ill people ate. Records indicated that the tahini used at these restaurants was Karawan brand tahini. The outbreak strain was isolated from opened and sealed containers of Karawan brand tahini collected at one of the restaurants.

WGS results showed that the *Salmonella* strain identified in Karawan brand tahini samples collected at a restaurant was closely related genetically to the *Salmonella* strain identified in ill people. These results provided more

evidence that people in this outbreak got sick from eating Karawan brand tahini.

Brodt Zenatti Holding LLC of Jupiter, Fla., [recalled](#)  Karawan and Soco brand tahini products because they might be contaminated with *Salmonella*. Restaurants and retailers should not serve or sell recalled Karawan or SoCobrand tahini products or products made with them, such as hummus. Consumers who have any recalled tahini products in their homes should not eat them and throw them away.

As of June 26, 2019, this outbreak appears to be over.