

Outbreak of *E. coli* Infections in 6 States

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CDC, public health and regulatory officials in several states, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are investigating several multistate outbreaks of *E. coli* O157:H7 infections. This investigation notice provides information on a third ongoing *E. coli* O157:H7 outbreak.

Latest Outbreak Information

At A Glance

- [Reported Cases](#): 12
 - [States](#): 6
 - Hospitalizations: 5
 - Deaths: 0
 - Recall: Yes
- 12 people infected with the outbreak strain of *E. coli* have been reported from 6 states.
 - 5 ill people were hospitalized. No deaths were reported.
 - Laboratory testing identified the outbreak strain in a sample of Tanimura & Antle romaine lettuce in a single-head package.
 - The sample was collected and tested by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) as part of its routine sampling.
 - On November 6, 2020, Tanimura & Antle recalled its packaged single-head romaine lettuce.
 - There is not enough epidemiologic and traceback information available at this time to determine if ill people got sick from eating Tanimura & Antle romaine lettuce. The investigation is ongoing to determine if additional products may be contaminated with the outbreak strain of *E. coli*.

Advice to Consumers and Retailers

Do not eat, sell, or serve Tanimura & Antle's recalled packaged single head romaine lettuce.

- UPC number: 0-27918-20314-9
- Packed on date: 10/15/2020 or 10/16/2020
- Produce Traceability Initiative (PTI) sticker for retailers and distributors: 571280289SRS1 and 571280290SRS1

If you have symptoms of an *E. coli* infection:

- Talk to your healthcare provider.
- Write down what you ate in the week before you got sick.
- Report your illness to your local or state health department.
- Help us solve the outbreak by answering public health officials' questions about your illness.

Symptoms of *E. coli* Infection

- People usually get sick from Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (STEC) 2 to 8 days (average of 3 to 4 days) after swallowing the germ.
- Symptoms often include severe stomach cramps, diarrhea (often bloody), and vomiting. Some people may have a fever, which usually is not very high (less than 101°F/38.5°C).
- Some people with a STEC infection may get a type of kidney failure called hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS).
- Antibiotics are not recommended for patients with suspected *E. coli* infections until diagnostic testing can be performed and *E. coli* infection is ruled out. Some studies have shown that administering antibiotics to patients with *E. coli* infections might increase their risk of developing HUS, and a benefit of treatment has not been clearly demonstrated.
- For more information, see [Symptoms of *E. coli* Infection](#).

Investigation Details

November 10, 2020

CDC, public health and regulatory officials in several states, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are investigating a multistate outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7 infections.

Public health investigators are using the [PulseNet](#) system to identify illnesses that may be 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 *E. coli* 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 are more likely to share a common source of infection.

As of November 9, 2020, a total of 12 people infected with the outbreak strain of *E. coli* O157:H7 have been reported from six states. 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 [September 2, 2020, to October 14, 2020](#). Ill people range in age from 8 to 62 years, with a median age of 21 years. Sixty-seven percent of ill people are female. Of 11 ill people with information available, 5 have been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported.

Illnesses might not yet be reported due to the time it takes between when a person becomes ill and when the illness is reported. This takes an average of 2 to 4 weeks. Please see the [Timeline for Reporting Cases of *E. coli* O157 Infection](#) for more details.

Investigation of the Outbreak

On November 6, 2020, Tanimura & Antle recalled packaged single head romaine lettuce after the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) identified *E. coli* O157:H7 in a sample of the packaged romaine lettuce. WGS results showed that the *E. coli* strain in the romaine lettuce sample was closely related genetically to the *E. coli* strain identified in ill people.

State and local public health officials are interviewing ill people to determine what they ate and other exposures in the week before they got sick. Of the 11 people interviewed, all reported eating various types of leafy greens, including romaine lettuce (5), spinach (5), iceberg lettuce (3), and red leaf lettuce (3).

There is not enough epidemiologic and traceback information available at this time to determine if ill people got sick from eating Tanimura & Antle romaine lettuce. The investigation is ongoing to determine if additional products may be contaminated with the outbreak strain of *E. coli*.

Do not eat, sell, or serve Tanimura & Antle's recalled packaged single head romaine lettuce.

CDC will provide more information as it becomes available.