

Listeria Outbreak Linked to Ice Cream



Food Safety Alert

Posted August 4, 2022

Fast Facts

- Illnesses: 25
- Hospitalizations: 24
- Deaths: 1
- [States](#): 11
- Recall: Yes
- Investigation status: Active



Recalled Food

Big Olaf Creamery ice cream

- The recalled ice cream was sold or served at Big Olaf retailers, restaurants, and senior homes in Florida, and in one location in Fredericksburg, Ohio.
- All flavors, lots, and expiration dates through 6/30/2022 of Big Olaf brand ice cream products have been recalled.
- Big Olaf brand ice cream was sold to consumers in plastic pint-size containers and plastic ½ gallon containers. The ice cream was sold to independent retail stores in plastic 2.5-gallon scoopable tubs.

What Everyone Should Do

Do not eat recalled Big Olaf Creamery ice cream.

- If you have recalled Big Olaf Creamery ice cream at home, throw it away.

Clean any areas, containers, and serving utensils that may have touched recalled ice cream.

What Businesses Should Do

Do not serve or sell recalled Big Olaf Creamery ice cream.

- Clean and disinfect any areas and equipment that may have touched recalled ice cream products, including ice cream scoops and other serving utensils.

What People at Higher Risk Should Do

***Listeria* is most likely to sicken pregnant people and their newborns, adults aged 65 or older, and people with weakened immune systems. Other people can be infected with *Listeria*, but they rarely become seriously ill.**

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these *Listeria* symptoms:

- **Pregnant people** typically experience only fever, fatigue, and muscle aches. However, *Listeria* infections during pregnancy can lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, premature delivery, or life-threatening infection of the newborn.
- **People who are not pregnant** may experience headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance, and convulsions, in addition to fever and muscle aches.

About *Listeria*

- *Listeria* can cause severe illness (known as invasive listeriosis) when the bacteria spread beyond the gut to other parts of the body.
- Pregnant people, adults 65 years or older, and people with weakened immune systems are at higher risk for severe illness.
- Symptoms of severe illness usually start within 2 weeks after eating food contaminated with *Listeria*, but may start as early as the same day or as late as 70 days after.
- *Listeria* can also cause common food poisoning symptoms, like diarrhea and fever. People who experience these symptoms usually recover without treatment.

Investigation Details

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The Florida Department of Health, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, CDC, public health and regulatory officials in several other states, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are collecting [different types of data](#) to investigate a multistate outbreak of *Listeria monocytogenes* infections linked to ice cream.

Epidemiologic Data

Since the last update on July 13, 2022, two more illnesses have been reported. As of August 2, 2022, a total of 25 people infected with the outbreak strain of *Listeria monocytogenes* have been reported from 11 states. Thirteen sick people

are residents of Florida and ten reported traveling to Florida before getting sick. Illnesses started on dates ranging from January 24, 2021, to June 24, 2022.

Sick people range in age from less than one to 92 years, with a median age of 72, and 56% are male. Of 25 people with information available, 24 have been hospitalized. One death in a person who was not pregnant has been reported from Illinois. Five people got sick during their pregnancy, and one person's illness resulted in a fetal loss.

The true number of sick people in an outbreak is likely higher than the number reported, and the outbreak may not be limited to the states with known illnesses. This is because some people recover without medical care and are not tested for *Listeria*. In addition, recent illnesses may not yet be reported as it usually takes [3 to 4 weeks](#) to determine if a sick person is part of an outbreak.

Public health officials continue to interview people about the foods they ate before they got sick. Of the 21 people interviewed, all (100%) reported eating ice cream. Among 17 people who remembered details about the type of ice cream they ate, 12 reported eating Big Olaf Creamery brand ice cream or eating ice cream at locations that might have been supplied by Big Olaf Creamery. Eight sick people were identified as part of three illness clusters in this outbreak. An illness cluster is defined as two or more people who do not live in the same household who report eating food from the same retail location before getting sick. If several unrelated sick people ate food from the same retail location, it suggests that the contaminated food item was served or sold there. All three illness clusters were at retail locations that sell Big Olaf Creamery ice cream.

Laboratory Data

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) collected samples of ice cream and environmental samples from the ice cream production area at the Big Olaf Creamery facility in Sarasota, Florida. FDACS also performed whole genome sequencing on these samples and the Florida Department of Health identified the outbreak strain in the samples collected from the ice cream and the environment.

Public Health Actions

On July 13, 2022, Big Olaf Creamery LLC recalled all flavors, lots, and expiration dates of Big Olaf brand ice cream through June 30, 2022. The Florida Department

of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) has issued a stop order and Big Olaf Creamery LLC is not currently producing ice cream.