

Listeria Outbreak Linked to Ice Cream



Food Safety Alert

Posted July 8, 2022

CDC is concerned that Big Olaf Creamery ice cream could still be in people's homes or available for sale in stores. Big Olaf Creamery ice cream is sold in Florida in Big Olaf Creamery stores and stores with different company names.

Fast Facts

- Illnesses: 23
- Hospitalizations: 22
- Deaths: 1
- [States](#): 10
- Recall: No
- Investigation status: Active

What Everyone Should Do

Do not eat Big Olaf Creamery ice cream.

- If you have any Big Olaf Creamery ice cream at home, throw it away.
- If you are in Florida and don't know if the ice cream being sold is Big Olaf Creamery brand, ask the store before you buy or eat it.

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

What Businesses Should Do

Do not serve or sell any Big Olaf Creamery ice cream products.

- Clean and disinfect any areas and equipment that may have touched Big Olaf Creamery 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, 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

No new illnesses have been reported since the initial announcement on June 30, 2022. As of July 8, 2022, a total of 23 people infected with the outbreak strain of *Listeria monocytogenes* have been reported from 10 states. Twelve sick people are residents of Florida and nine reported traveling to Florida before getting sick. Illnesses started on dates ranging from January 24, 2021, through June 12, 2022.

Sick people range in age from less than 1 to 92 years, with a median age of 72, and 52% are male. Twenty-two people (96%) 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. 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 18 people interviewed, all (100%) reported eating ice cream. Among 18 people who remembered details about the type of ice cream they ate, 10 reported eating Big Olaf Creamery brand ice cream or eating ice cream at locations that might have been supplied by Big Olaf Creamery. Seven ill 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 becoming ill. If several unrelated ill 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.

This investigation is ongoing to determine if any additional products are linked to illnesses.

Public Health Actions

CDC is concerned that Big Olaf Creamery ice cream could still be in people's homes or available for sale in stores in Florida. CDC recommends people not eat,

and restaurants and retailers not serve or sell Big Olaf Creamery ice cream.
Consumers should throw away any remaining products they have at home.