

E. coli Outbreak Linked to Packaged Salads



Food Safety Alert

Posted January 6, 2022

Fast Facts

- Illnesses: 10
- Hospitalizations: 4
- Deaths: 0
- [States](#): 4
- Recall: No
- Investigation status: Active



Contaminated Food

Simple Truth Organic Power Greens and Nature's Basket Organic Power Greens

- Organic Power Greens salad is a mix of organic spinach, mizuna, kale, and chard
- Sold at grocery stores and supermarkets, including Fred Meyer, QFC, and Giant Eagle
- "Best if used by" dates through December 20, 2021

Eight people ate Simple Truth Organic Power Greens, and one sick person ate Nature's Basket Organic Power Greens. Investigators are working to determine if additional products may be contaminated.

What You Should Do

- **Do not eat Simple Truth Organic Power Greens or Nature's Basket Organic Power Greens with "best if used by" dates through December 20, 2021.**
 - Check your refrigerator and freezer, and throw any away.
 - Even if you ate some and did not get sick, throw the rest away.
- **Wash items and surfaces** that may have touched the salad using hot soapy water or a dishwasher.
- **Call your healthcare provider** if you have any of these severe *E. coli* symptoms:
 - Diarrhea and a fever higher than 102°F
 - Diarrhea for more than 3 days that is not improving
 - Bloody diarrhea
 - So much vomiting that you cannot keep liquids down
 - Signs of dehydration, such as:
 - Not peeing much
 - Dry mouth and throat
 - Feeling dizzy when standing up

What Businesses Should Do

Retailers and restaurants do not need to take any action at this time. Information we have now does not suggest that products currently on the market are contaminated.

Symptoms of *E. coli*

- Most people infected with Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* experience severe stomach cramps, diarrhea (often bloody), and vomiting.
 - Symptoms usually start 3 to 4 days after swallowing the bacteria.
 - Most people recover without treatment after 5 to 7 days.
- Some people may develop a type of kidney failure (hemolytic uremic syndrome, also called HUS) and would need to be hospitalized.

Investigation Details

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Since the last update on December 30, 2021, CDC updated the [case definition](#) and removed three illnesses from this outbreak investigation. These three people were infected with *E. coli* bacteria that were not as closely related genetically to the rest in this outbreak. None of the three sick people reported eating Organic Power Greens.

Epidemiologic Data

As of January 6, 2022, a total of 10 people infected with the outbreak strain of *E. coli* O157:H7 have been reported from four states. Illnesses started on dates ranging from November 27, 2021, to December 9, 2021.

Sick people range in age from 26 to 79 years, with a median age of 59, and 100% are female. Of ten people with information available, four have been hospitalized and one person developed a type of kidney failure called hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS). No deaths have been reported.

The true number of sick people in an outbreak is likely much higher than the number reported, and the outbreak may not be limited to the states with known illnesses. This is because many people recover without medical care and are not tested for *E. coli*. 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.

State and local public health officials interviewed people about the foods they ate in the week before they got sick. Nine people reported eating Organic Power Greens sold under the Simple Truth Organic brand (8) and the Nature's Basket brand (1), and seven people's shopper records showed the purchase of these products. Both brands of Organic Power Greens have the same mix of leafy greens: organic spinach, mizuna, kale, and chard.

Previous Updates

[December 30, 2021](#)

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

Epidemiologic data show that Simple Truth Organic brand and Nature's Basket brand Organic Power Greens may be contaminated with *E. coli* and may be making people sick.

Epidemiologic Data

As of December 29, 2021, 13 people infected with the outbreak strain of *E. coli* O157:H7 have been reported from six states. Illnesses started on dates ranging from November 27, 2021, to December 9, 2021..

Sick people range in age from 4 to 79 years, with a median age of 54, and 92% are female. Of 12 people with information available, four have been hospitalized and one person developed a type of kidney failure called hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS). No deaths have been reported.

The true number of sick people in an outbreak is likely much higher than the number reported, and the outbreak may not be limited to the states with known illnesses. This is because many people recover without medical care and are not tested for *E. coli*. 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.

State and local public health officials are interviewing people about the foods they ate in the week before they got sick. Of 12 people interviewed, all reported eating packaged salads. Of 10 people who provided brand information, 6 ate or bought Simple Truth Organic Power Greens and 1 ate Nature's Basket Organic Power Greens. Both Organic Power Greens salads have the same mix of leafy greens: organic spinach, mizuna, kale, and chard. Several sick people reported using these salads in smoothies.

Laboratory Data

Public health investigators are using the PulseNet system to identify illnesses that may be part of this outbreak. CDC PulseNet manages a national database of DNA fingerprints of bacteria that cause foodborne illnesses. DNA fingerprinting is performed on bacteria using a method called whole genome sequencing (WGS).

WGS showed that bacteria from sick people's samples are closely related genetically. This suggests that people in this outbreak got sick from the same food.

Public Health Actions

CDC is advising not to eat Simple Truth Organic Power Greens and Nature's Basket Organic Power Greens with "best if used by" dates through December 20, 2021. Investigators are working to determine if additional products may be contaminated.