

Multistate Outbreak of Hepatitis A Virus Infections Linked to Frozen Organic Strawberries

At a Glance

- Reported cases: 8
- States: 2
- Hospitalizations: 2
- Deaths: 0

Advice to Consumers

CDC recommends that people who purchased recalled frozen organic strawberries should not eat, serve, or sell these recalled frozen organic strawberries.

- Check your freezer for these recalled frozen organic strawberries and return or throw away any remaining product.
- If you have eaten these recalled frozen organic strawberries within the last 14 days and are not vaccinated against hepatitis A, contact your [local health department](#) or health care provider to discuss postexposure prophylaxis (hepatitis A vaccine or immune globulin). Getting postexposure prophylaxis within 14 days of exposure can help prevent illness.

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Outbreak Information

- As of April 21, 2023, there are:
 - 8 outbreak-associated cases of hepatitis A reported from 2 states (California and Washington).
 - Illnesses started on dates ranging from November 24, 2022, to April 12, 2023.
 - 2 people have been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported.
- [Epidemiologic and traceback evidence](#) indicate that frozen organic strawberries are the likely source of this outbreak.

- In interviews, 8/8 (100%) people reported eating frozen organic strawberries.

What is Hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a contagious liver infection caused by the hepatitis A virus. The hepatitis A virus is found in the stool and blood of people who are infected. The hepatitis A virus is spread when someone ingests the virus, usually through close personal contact with an infected person or from eating contaminated food or drink. Hepatitis A can be prevented with a vaccine, which is [recommended for all children at age one and adults at risk](#).

Symptoms of Hepatitis A

- Symptoms of hepatitis A usually appear 2 to 7 weeks after exposure and can include
 - Yellow skin or eyes
 - Not wanting to eat
 - Upset stomach
 - Stomach pain
 - Throwing up
 - Fever
 - Dark urine or light-colored stools
 - Joint pain
 - Diarrhea
 - Feeling tired
- Not everyone with hepatitis A has symptoms. Adults are more likely to have symptoms than children.
- People who get hepatitis A may feel sick for a few weeks to several months but usually recover completely and do not have lasting liver damage. In some people, though, the illness may be so severe that the patient needs to be hospitalized.
- In rare cases, hepatitis A can cause liver failure and even death. This is more common in older people and in people with other serious health issues, such as chronic liver disease.

Investigation Details

CDC, state public health and regulatory officials, and the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#) are investigating an outbreak of hepatitis A linked to frozen organic strawberries imported from certain farms located in Baja California,

Mexico, by a common supplier. Frozen organic strawberries may be sold to a variety of retailers under multiple brand labels. Traceback and epidemiological investigations show that people with outbreak-associated cases purchased the same retail brand of frozen organic strawberries prior to becoming ill.

As of April 21, 2023, a total of 8 outbreak-associated cases of hepatitis A have been reported from 2 states.

Illnesses started on dates ranging from November 24, 2022, to April 12, 2023. Ill people range in age from 38 to 64 years, with a median age of 54.5 years. Twenty-five percent of ill people are female. Of 8 people with available information, 2 (25%) have been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported.

Investigation of the Outbreak

[Epidemiologic and traceback evidence](#) indicate that frozen organic strawberries, imported fresh from certain farms located in Baja California, Mexico in 2022, are the likely source of this outbreak. The hepatitis A virus strain causing illnesses in this outbreak is genetically identical to the strain that caused a [foodborne hepatitis A outbreak in 2022](#), which was linked to fresh organic strawberries imported from Baja California, Mexico, and sold at various retailers.

In interviews, ill people answered questions about the foods they ate and other exposures in the 2 to 7 weeks before they became ill. Of people who were interviewed, 8/8 (100%) reported eating frozen organic strawberries. This proportion was significantly higher than results from a [survey](#) of healthy people in which 24% reported eating frozen berries in the week before they were interviewed.

In response to this investigation, California Splendor, Inc. of San Diego, California [voluntarily recalled](#) certain lots of 4-lb. bags of Kirkland Signature Frozen Organic Whole Strawberries that were sold at Costco stores in Los Angeles, California; Hawaii; and two San Diego, California business centers. The lots subject to this recall include: 140962-08, 142222-23, 142792-54, 142862-57, 142912-59, 142162-20, 142202-21, 142782-53, 142852-56, 142902-58, 142212-22, 142232-24, 142842-55.

In response to this investigation, Scenic Fruit Company of Gresham, Oregon [voluntarily recalled](#) frozen organic strawberries, sold to Costco, Trader Joe's, Aldi,

KeHE, Vital Choice Seafood, and PCC Community Markets in certain states.

Products subject to this recall include:

Multistate Outbreak of Hepatitis A Virus Infections – Brands Affected

Brand Name	Product Name	Net Wt.	UPC	Best By Date
Simply Nature	Organic Strawberries	24 oz.	4099100256222	6/14/2024
Vital Choice	Organic Strawberries	16 oz.	834297005024	5/20/2024
Kirkland Signature	Organic Strawberries	4 lbs.	96619140404	10/8/2024
Made With	Organic Strawberries	10 oz.	814343021390	11/20/2024
PCC Community Markets	Organic Strawberries	32 oz.	22827109469	29/10/2024
Trader Joe's	Organic Tropical Fruit Blend Pineapple, Bananas, Strawberries & Mango	16 oz.	00511919	04/25/24, 05/12/24, 05/23/24, 05/30/24, 06/07/24

On March 17, 2023, a retailer, Meijer, also issued press to [voluntarily recall](#) Made-With brand frozen organic strawberries from certain market store locations.

FDA's investigation is ongoing; additional products might be included in the future.