

Listeria Outbreak Linked to Ice Cream



Food Safety Alert

Posted October 26, 2023

This outbreak is over. Stay up to date on food recalls and outbreaks to avoid getting sick from eating contaminated food.

Fast Facts

- Illnesses: 2
- Hospitalizations: 2
- Deaths: 0
- [States](#): 2
- Recall: Yes
- Investigation status: Closed



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Outbreak Investigation Summary

[Data](#) showed that ice cream made by The Ice Cream House of Brooklyn, NY, made people in this outbreak sick.

- One sick person ate “Soft Serve on The Go” ice cream cups, and the other person likely ate the same ice cream cup at a long-term care facility they lived.
- The outbreak strain of *Listeria* was found in “Soft Serve On The Go” ice cream cups, “Ice Cream House” mini dessert cigar novelty ice cream, and several environmental samples taken from two of The Ice Cream House stores.
- “Ice Cream House” products and “Soft Serve On The Go” ice cream cups were made by The Ice Cream House of Brooklyn, NY.

Recalled Food

“Ice Cream House” ice cream and frozen dessert products and “Soft Serve On The Go” ice cream cups were recalled in August and September.

- “Ice Cream House” products were sold at Ice Cream House store locations in Brooklyn, NY, and at grocery stores in New Jersey, New York, and Ohio.
- “Soft Serve On The Go” ice cream cups were sold nationwide and also distributed to long-term care facilities and nursing homes.
- Recalled products do not have a lot code on the label.

What You Should Do

Check your freezer for recalled ice cream products. If you have any left:

- Do not eat them. Throw them away or return them to where you bought them.
- Call a healthcare provider right away if you have these symptoms after eating recalled ice cream:
 - Pregnant people usually have fever, muscle aches, and tiredness.
 - People who are not pregnant usually have fever, muscle aches, and tiredness. They may also get a headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance, or seizures.

Stay healthy and prevent getting sick from *Listeria*:

- Find out if you are at [higher risk](#) for getting sick with *Listeria*.
- Learn which foods are more likely to contain *Listeria*, and take steps to [prevent getting sick](#).

- Stay up to date on food [recalls](#) and [outbreaks](#) to avoid getting sick from eating contaminated food.

Investigation Details

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CDC, public health and regulatory officials in several states, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) investigated a multistate outbreak of *Listeria monocytogenes* infections.

Epidemiologic, laboratory, and traceback data showed that ice cream made by The Ice Cream House of Brooklyn, NY, made people sick.

As of October 26, 2023, this outbreak is over.

Epidemiologic Data

Two people infected with the outbreak strain of *Listeria* were reported from two states: one from New York and one from Pennsylvania (see [map](#)). Sick people's samples were collected in May and June 2023 (see [timeline](#)). Both sick people were hospitalized, and neither died.

The true number of sick people in this outbreak is likely higher than the number reported, and this outbreak may not have been limited to the states with known illnesses. This is because some people recover without medical care and are not tested for *Listeria*.

Public health officials collected many different types of information from sick people, including their age, race, ethnicity, other demographics, and the foods they ate in the month before they got sick. This information provided clues to help investigators identify the source of the outbreak.

The table below has information about sick people in this outbreak (“n” is the number of people with information available for each demographic).

Table of demographic information (n is the number of people with information available)

Demographics	Information
Age (n=2)	Median age of 77 years
Sex (n=2)	50% Female 50% Male
Race (n=1)	100% White
Ethnicity (n=2)	100% non-Hispanic

State and local public health officials from Pennsylvania and New York interviewed people (or their family) about the foods they ate in the month before they got sick. One sick person bought “Soft Serve On The Go” ice cream cups from a grocery store, and the other person likely ate the same ice cream cup at a long-term care facility they were living in.

Laboratory and Traceback Data

Public health investigators used the [PulseNet](#) system to identify illnesses that were 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 were closely related genetically. This suggests that people in this outbreak got sick from the same food.

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture found the outbreak strain of *Listeria* in an unopened “Soft Serve On The Go” vanilla chocolate ice cream cup that the sick person had in their freezer. The ice cream tested was

purchased after their illness started, but the person bought and ate the same brand and flavor of ice cream several times before getting sick.

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets found the outbreak strain of *Listeria* in five “Soft Serve On The Go” ice cream cups that were collected from the manufacturing location.

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene found the outbreak strain of *Listeria* in an “Ice Cream House” mini dessert cigar novelty ice cream product and several environmental samples taken from two of The Ice Cream House stores.

“Ice Cream House” products and “Soft Serve On The Go” ice cream cups were made at the same facility, at The Ice Cream House of Brooklyn, NY.

Public Health Actions

On August 9, 2023, Real Kosher Ice Cream [recalled](#) all flavors of “Soft Serve On The Go” ice cream cups.

On August 30, 2023, The Ice Cream House [recalled](#) all their dairy ice cream and non-dairy frozen dessert products with the “Ice Cream House” logo.