

Investigation Update: Listeria Outbreak, Meats Sliced at Delis

Key points

Latest update: More illnesses and deaths have been reported in this outbreak. *Listeria* is a hardy germ that can remain on surfaces, like meat slicers, and foods, even at refrigerated temperatures. It can also take up to 10 weeks for some people to have symptoms of listeriosis. Do not eat recalled deli meats. Some of the products have sell by dates into October 2024.

Latest update

August 28, 2024

CDC, public health and regulatory officials in several states, and the [U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service \(USDA-FSIS\)](#) are collecting different types of data to investigate a multistate outbreak of *Listeria monocytogenes* infections.

Epidemiologic, laboratory, and traceback data show that meats sliced at deli counters, including Boar's Head brand liverwurst, are contaminated with *Listeria* and are making people sick.

Epidemiologic Data

Since the last update on August 8, 14 more illnesses and six more deaths have been reported. As of August 27, a total of 57 people infected with the outbreak strain of *Listeria* have been reported from 18 states. Sick people's samples were collected from May 29, 2024 to August 16, 2024. Of 57 people with information available, all 57 have been hospitalized. One person got sick during their pregnancy and remained pregnant after recovering. Nine deaths have been reported, including one in Illinois, one in New Jersey, one in Virginia, and as of this update one in Florida, one in Tennessee, one in New Mexico, one in New York, and two in South Carolina.

The true number of sick people in this 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 collect 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 provides clues to help investigators identify the source of the outbreak.

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

- Age (n=57): Range from 32 to 95 years, Median of 77
- Sex (n=57): 51% female, 49% male
- Race (n=52): 75% White, 17% African American/Black, 4% Asian, 4% Other
- Ethnicity (n=48): 94% non-Hispanic, 6% Hispanic

State and local public health officials are interviewing people about the foods they ate in the month before they got sick. People are reporting eating a variety of meats sliced at deli counters. Of the 44 people able to be interviewed, 41 (93%) reported eating deli meats. Thirty-nine of the 41 (95%) reported eating meats sliced at a deli. Of the 41 people who answered if they ate liverwurst, 25 (61%) reported deli-sliced liverwurst before getting sick, and 19 reported Boar's Head brand. These deli meats were sliced at a variety of supermarket and grocery store delis.

Public Health Actions

CDC advises people to not eat recalled deli meat products. CDC always advises people who are pregnant, aged 65 or older, or have a weakened immune system, to avoid eating deli meats or to heat them before consuming.

Previous updates