

November 21, 2024

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

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

Epidemiologic data

Since the last update on September 25, two more illnesses were reported. As of November 19, a total of 61 people infected with the outbreak strain of *Listeria* were reported from 19 states. Sick people's samples were collected from May 29, 2024, to September 13, 2024. Of 61 people with information available, 60 were hospitalized. One person got sick during their pregnancy and remained pregnant after recovering. Ten deaths were reported, including one in Illinois, one in New Jersey, two in New York, one in Virginia, one in Florida, one in Tennessee, one in New Mexico, and two in South Carolina.

The true number of sick people in this outbreak was likely higher than the number reported, and the 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*. 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=61): Range from 32 to 95 years, Median of 78
- Sex (n=61): 49% female, 51% male
- Race (n=56): 78% White, 16% African American/Black, 3% Asian, 3% Other
- Ethnicity (n=52): 94% non-Hispanic, 6% Hispanic

State and local public health officials interviewed people about the foods they ate in the month before they got sick. People reported eating a variety of meats sliced at deli counters. Of the 48 people able to be interviewed, 45 (94%) reported eating deli meats. Forty-three of the 45 (96%) reported eating meats sliced at a deli. Of the 44 people who answered if they ate liverwurst, 27 (61%) reported deli-sliced liverwurst before getting sick and 20 specifically reported Boar's Head brand. These deli meats were sliced at a variety of supermarket and grocery store delis.

Public health actions

This outbreak is over. 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.

In July 2024, Boar's Head issued a recall of all deli products made at their Jarratt, VA facility, which included prepackaged deli products and ready-to-eat liverwurst products, due to being contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*. These products are past shelf-life.