

More than 20 inmates sickened with Salmonella at St. Joseph County jail

The incident is under investigation by the county and state health departments.

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SOUTH BEND, Ind. (WNDU) - Health department officials are investigating a food poisoning outbreak after 23 St. Joseph County inmates came down with salmonella.

The St. Joseph County Police Department said the inmates presented with symptoms such as diarrhea, dehydration and fever on April 29. The police department said it is not yet clear where the salmonella originated.

The jail kitchen passed an inspection just five days before the outbreak, the police department said.

“The Jail kitchen passed that inspection with no critical violations found and jail kitchen staff made immediate corrections to two minor non-critical violations, including standing water on the floor near a dish machine and mold found on wire racks in a walk-in cooler,” the police department said.

Monnese Plummer said her son, an inmate at the jail, got extremely sick and spent several days at Memorial Hospital.

“It started Wednesday where he first started feeling symptoms and so he had very bad cold chills, he was shaking very very bad,” Plummer said.

“They had given him 3 IV bags in the course period of a short time. He started to seize, you know he was like having seizures a bit and his blood pressure had gotten so low that he told me that the hospital told him that if he had laid there one more day there was a possibility that his health would have been in extreme jeopardy,” Plummer said.

Sheriff Bill Redman said in a statement that most of the inmates have fully recovered and a few are still being treated for food poisoning symptoms.

The department said that jail staff will continue to work with the food service provider, medical provider, and county and state health departments to find a direct cause of the illness.