

Summary and Action Items

- 1.) A multi-state outbreak of *Salmonella* illness linked to pre-cut melon distributed by Caito Foods, LLC.
- 2.) Health care providers should consider *Salmonella* in the differential diagnosis in patients with clinically compatible illness and who have recently consumed pre-cut melon.
- 3.) Health care providers should obtain stool cultures in such cases and promptly report cases to their Local Health Department.
- 4.) Laboratories should forward all positive *Salmonella* specimens to the IDPH laboratories; it is recommended that non-culture positive GI panels be confirmed with a culture.

Background

The Illinois Department of Public Health has identified five *Salmonella* cases that are a match to a multistate outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Carrau. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is currently reporting 93 cases from nine states – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Alabama, Kentucky, Minnesota, and Wisconsin with the earliest illness onset reported as March 4, 2019. Information collected to date indicates that pre-cut melons distributed by Caito Foods, LLC could be contaminated with *Salmonella* and could make people sick.

Potential Exposures

Caito Foods, LLC has distributed pre-cut melons that could be contaminated with *Salmonella* and could make people sick.

Symptoms

Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps 12 to 72 hours after being exposed to the bacteria. The illness usually lasts four to seven days, and most people recover without treatment. In some people, the diarrhea may be so severe that the patient needs to be hospitalized. *Salmonella* infection may spread from the intestines to the bloodstream and then to other places in the body. Children younger than five years, adults older than 65 years, and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to have a severe illness.

Transmission

People can become infected with *Salmonella* by consuming contaminated pre-cut melon.

Diagnosis

Health care providers are asked to consider the diagnosis of *Salmonella* in persons who have consumed pre-cut melon distributed by Caito Foods, LLC and have clinically compatible illness, and submit culture for diagnosis. Please ask patients if they have consumed pre-cut melons in the days prior to illness onset.

Laboratories are reminded that they must forward specimens positive for *Salmonella* to IDPH laboratories. If a non-culture GI panel is used and a positive result for *Salmonella* is obtained,

the testing laboratory is encouraged to confirm the results with culture, but if an isolate is not available, specimens should be preserved appropriately and sent to IDPH promptly. If an isolate is obtained, please forward that specimen to the IDPH laboratory for subtyping.

Health care providers and laboratories should rapidly report any probable or confirmed cases of *Salmonella* to their local health department. Local health departments should promptly ask probable or confirmed cases if they have consumed pre-cut melons. If the case still has the product they should be told not to consume it and to hold it in case testing of the product is needed. Leftover product will not be tested unless the person that consumed the product is a confirmed case of *Salmonella*.

Prevention

Any pre-cut melon distributed by Caito Foods, LLC should be thrown out or returned to the store, with the exception of product for testing as described above.

IDPH and LHD Response

Local health departments should notify IDPH of *Salmonella* cases pending serotyping that identify consuming pre-cut melon distributed by Caito Foods Services. IDPH is working to identify additional cases and perform laboratory testing.

Contact

For questions or additional information about the outbreak, please contact the IDPH Communicable Disease Control Section at 217-782-2016. Clinicians should contact their local health department to identify prevention resources and to report cases.

<http://www.idph.state.il.us/LHDMAP/HealthRegions.aspx>

Additional Resources

Once CDC and FDA release information, updates will be available on the following websites:

<https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/outbreaks/multistate-outbreaks/outbreaks-list.html>

<https://www.fda.gov/>

Target Audience

Local Health Departments, Infectious Disease Physicians, Hospital Emergency Departments, Infection Preventionists, Health Care Providers, and Laboratories

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