



Multistate Outbreak of *Listeria* linked to Meats Sliced at Delis

Update: November 21, 2024

Initial Postings: July 31, August 8, September 25, 2024

Outbreak Status: Concluded

The New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) worked closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA-FSIS) on a multistate outbreak of *Listeria* infections linked to meats sliced at delis.

- The bacterium *Listeria monocytogenes* can contaminate many food items and people who eat those foods can develop an infection called Listeriosis.
- Signs and symptoms of *Listeria* infection vary depending on the person infected. *Listeria* can cause an intestinal illness that usually lasts 1–3 days and most people recover without treatment.
- People who are pregnant, aged 65 or older, or have weakened immune systems are likely to develop a more severe condition called invasive listeriosis. CDC estimates that *Listeria* is the third leading cause of death among foodborne illnesses in the United States.
- Infection is usually diagnosed when a laboratory test detects *Listeria* in body tissue or fluid, such as blood, spinal fluid, or the placenta. Most *Listeria* infections are treated with antibiotics, but treatment depends on illness severity.

Outbreak Summary:

	Case Count	States/Counties	Specimen Collection Range
National	61	19	05/29/24 – 09/13/24
NJ	6	3	06/02/24 – 08/28/24

- As of November 21, 2024, a total of 61 people infected with the outbreak strain of *Listeria monocytogenes* were reported from 19 states. Specimen collection dates ranged from May 29 to September 13, 2024. Ill people ranged in age from 32 to 95 years. Of the 61 individuals with information available, 60 were hospitalized. One person got sick during their pregnancy and remained pregnant after recovering. Unfortunately, ten deaths were reported: 1 each in Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New Mexico, Tennessee, Virginia, and 2 each in New York and South Carolina.
- NJ had 6 cases associated with this outbreak from 3 counties: Monmouth (4), Passaic (1) and Ocean (1). Specimen collection dates ranged from June 2 to August 28, 2024.
- 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.
- This outbreak is over. However, even when there are no ongoing outbreaks people who are pregnant, aged 65 or older, or have a weakened immune system should avoid eating deli meat or reheat it to an internal temperature of 165°F or until steaming hot before eating.

Resources:

- [Listeria Outbreak Linked to Meats Sliced at Delis \(CDC web posting\)](#)
- [CDC Listeriosis webpage](#)