

## Multistate Outbreak of *Salmonella* Reading Infections Linked to Raw Turkey Products

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Updated from: July 20, 2018

Outbreak Status: Ongoing

The New Jersey Department of Health is working with the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), public health and regulatory officials in several states investigating a multistate outbreak of multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* infections linked to raw turkey products.

- *Salmonella* Reading is one of many different serotypes of *Salmonella* bacteria, which all cause similar illnesses.
- Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever and abdominal cramps between 12 - 72 hours after infection and illness typically lasts 4 to 7 days.
- Individuals usually recover even without treatment however in some people, the diarrhea may be severe enough to require hospitalization.
- We encourage people to contact their health care provider if they have diarrhea that lasts for more than 3 days or if diarrhea is accompanied by high fever, blood in the stool, or so much vomiting that they cannot keep liquids down and they pass very little urine.
- *Salmonella* infection may spread from the intestines to the bloodstream and then to other places in the body.
- Children younger than 5 years, adults older than 65 years, and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to have severe illness.

### Outbreak Summary:

	Case Count	States/Counties	Illness Onset Range
National	164	35	11/20/17 - 10/20/18
NJ	8	6	04/14/18 - 09/06/18

### Key Points:

- As of Nov 5, 2018; 164 people have been infected from 35 states, illnesses started on dates from Nov 20, 2017, to October 20, 2018 and ill people range in age from less than one year to 91 yrs. with a median of 45 and 56% female. Out of 85 people with information available, 44 (52%) have been hospitalized. One death has been reported from California.
- Forty-four (52%) of 85 people interviewed reported preparing or eating turkey products that were purchased raw, including ground turkey, turkey pieces, and whole turkey. Ill people reported buying many different brands of raw turkey products from multiple stores. Also, 3 of the 85 ill people interviewed became sick after pets in their home ate raw ground turkey pet food. Three of the 61 ill people interviewed worked in a facility that raises or processes turkeys or lived with someone who did and 3 of 85 people interviewed became sick after their pets ate raw ground turkey pet food.
- NJ has 8 cases associated with this outbreak from six counties; Essex (2) Mercer (2), Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean; illnesses started on dates from April 14, 2018 to September 06, 2018; ill people range in age from 2 to 84 yrs. and five (62%) percent are male. Out of 7 people with information available, five (71%) were hospitalized and all have been discharged.

- Two (50%) of the four cases for whom exposure information was available, reported eating or turkey products in the week before illness onset.
- Laboratory testing identified the outbreak strain in samples from raw turkey pet food in Minnesota, from raw turkey products from ill people's homes in several states. The outbreak strain was also identified in samples from raw turkey products from 22 slaughter and 7 processing establishments.
- A single, common supplier of raw turkey products or of live turkeys has not been identified.
- The outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Reading is present in live turkeys and in many types of raw turkey products, indicating it might be widespread in the turkey industry. CDC and USDA-FSIS have shared this information with representatives from the turkey industry and asked about steps that they may be taking to reduce the contamination.

#### Advice to Consumers:

- Be aware that raw turkey may be contaminated with germs
- Wash hands thoroughly before preparing or eating food, after contact with animals and after changing diapers or using restrooms.
- Raw turkey should always be handled carefully and cooked thoroughly to an internal temperature of 165°F and leftovers should also be reheated to 165°F.
- Hands, counters, cutting boards and utensils should be washed thoroughly with warm, soapy water after touching raw turkey or raw meats to prevent Salmonella infection.
- CDC also does not recommend feeding raw diets to pets.

#### Additional Resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/reading-07-18/index.html> (CDC)

<https://www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/ucm596043.htm> (FDA)

This investigation is ongoing and additional updates will be provided as more information becomes available.