



FEB. 15, 2007

HEALTH ADVISORY

Multi-state Outbreak of *Salmonella* Tennessee Infections, August 2006 – January 2007

Public health officials in multiple states, with the assistance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), are investigating a large outbreak of *Salmonella* Tennessee infections. As of Feb. 14, 2007, 5 p.m. CST, 288 individuals with illness have been reported to CDC from 39 states; Alaska, Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Carolina, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin and West Virginia.

State public health officials continue to investigate cases of illness. Among 120 patients for whom clinical information is available, 31 (26%) were hospitalized. There have been no reports of deaths attributed to this infection. Onset dates, which are known for 140 patients, ranged from Aug. 1, 2006, to Jan. 21, 2007. The outbreak has been prolonged and of low intensity, with zero to two new cases reported daily in January nationwide. Two closely related DNA fingerprint patterns of *Salmonella* Tennessee isolates have been associated with this outbreak. DNA fingerprinting is routinely done at public health laboratories in all states as part of PulseNet (the network of public health laboratories that sub-type bacteria).

CDC is working with state and local health officials, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to determine the food responsible for this outbreak. Public health investigators have identified peanut butter as being consumed more often by ill persons than well persons and as statistically linked with illness. Evaluation of additional information about the brand of peanut butter, the consumption habits of cases, and the patterns of distribution of cases is ongoing. Health officials and peanut butter industry representatives are working collaboratively to learn more about production of peanut butter to determine how it may have become contaminated.

As of Feb. 15, 2007, no cases of *Salmonella* Tennessee infections have been reported to the North Dakota Department of Health. People who think they may have become ill from eating peanut butter are advised to contact their health-care provider. Health-care providers are requested to collect appropriate stool samples for testing on patients that may have *Salmonella* infections. To report *Salmonella* infections to the North Dakota Department of Health, call 800.472.2180.

Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever and abdominal cramps 12 to 72 hours after infection. The illness usually lasts four to seven days, and most people recover without treatment. However, in some people, the diarrhea may be so severe that the patient needs to be hospitalized. The elderly, infants and those with impaired immune systems are more likely to have a severe illness.

For more information about *Salmonella* infection and this outbreak, please visit the following websites: www.ndhealth.gov/disease/Outbreak/Salmonella.htm and www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/submenus/sub_salmonella.htm.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

- *Health Alert conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.*
- *Health Advisory provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.*
- *Health Update provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.*
- *Health Information provides general information that is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.*

This message is being sent to local public health units, clinics, hospitals, physicians, tribal health, North Dakota Nurses Association, North Dakota Long Term Care Association, North Dakota Healthcare Association, North Dakota Medical Association, North Dakota EMS Association and hospital public information officers.