

DPH Advises Delaware Residents of Multistate E. Coli Outbreak Involving Chopped Romaine Lettuce

The Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) is advising Delawareans of a multistate outbreak of *E. coli* infections linked to chopped romaine lettuce from the Yuma, Arizona, growing region. The lettuce could be contaminated with Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 and could make people sick. To date, there have been no confirmed cases reported in Delaware, but DPH urges consumers to take precautions to prevent illness.

Consumers who have store-bought chopped romaine lettuce at home, including salads and salad mixes containing chopped romaine lettuce, should not eat it and instead throw it away, even if some of it was eaten and no one has gotten sick. If you do not know if the lettuce is romaine, do not eat it and throw it away. Before purchasing romaine lettuce at a grocery store or eating it at a restaurant, consumers should confirm with the store or restaurant that it is not chopped romaine lettuce from the Yuma, Arizona, growing region. Do not buy or eat it if the source of the romaine lettuce is unknown.

Restaurants and retailers should not serve or sell any chopped romaine lettuce, including salads and salad mixes containing chopped romaine lettuce, from the Yuma, Arizona, growing region. Businesses should ask their suppliers about the source of their chopped romaine lettuce.

The Centers For Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and multiple states are investigating the outbreak. According to the CDC, no common

grower, supplier, distributor, or brand has been identified at this time.

- 35 people infected with the outbreak strain of *E. coli* 0157:H7 have been reported from 11 states. According to the CDC, nearby Pennsylvania has reported nine cases, New Jersey has reported seven cases, and Virginia has reported one case.
- 22 ill people have been hospitalized, and three people have developed kidney failure. No deaths have been reported.

People usually get sick from Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* two to eight days (average of three to four days) after swallowing the bacteria. Most people infected with *E. coli* 0157 develop diarrhea, severe stomach cramps and vomiting. Most people recover within one week. Some illnesses last longer and can be more severe, resulting in a type of kidney failure called hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS). HUS can occur in people of any age but is most common in young children under 5 years, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems.

Symptoms of HUS can include fever, abdominal pain, pale skin tone, fatigue and irritability, small, unexplained bruises or bleeding from the nose and mouth, and decreased urination. People who experience these symptoms should seek emergency medical care immediately. Medical providers should report suspected cases of *E. coli* 0157:H7 to the DPH Office of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at 302-744-4990 or 24/7 at 888-295-5156.

For more information:

[CDC: Multistate Outbreak of *E. coli* 0157:H7 Infections Linked to Chopped Romaine Lettuce](#)

[CDC: Multistate Outbreak of *E. coli* 0157:H7 Infections Linked to Chopped Romaine Lettuce \(Español\)](#)

[Advice to Consumers, Restaurants, and Retailers](#)

A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled can call the DPH phone number above by using TTY services. Dial 7-1-1 or 800-232-5460 to type your conversation to a relay operator, who reads your conversation to a hearing person at DPH. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words back to the TTY user. To learn more about TTY availability in Delaware, visit <http://delawarerelay.com>.

Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.