

NEWS BRIEF

CDC Says Salmonella Outbreak Linked to Onions

In a recent food safety alert, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identified fresh whole onions as the source for the recent mysterious salmonella outbreak. The CDC first reported the outbreak in mid-September as they started their investigation of the multistate presence of the strain Salmonella Oranienburg. As of this writing, 652 people have been infected across 37 states.

According to the CDC, the affected red, white and yellow onions were imported from Chihuahua, Mexico, and distributed by ProSource Inc., based in Hailey, Idaho. The onions were sold to restaurants and available at grocery stores throughout the United States. Investigators are still working to determine whether other onions and suppliers are linked to this outbreak.

Health officials still believe that the number of people infected is likely much higher since some people recover from illness without medical care and aren't tested for salmonella.

What Is Salmonella?

Salmonella are bacteria that cause intestinal illness. According to the CDC, common symptoms of salmonella infection include the following:

- Diarrhea
- Fever
- Abdominal cramps
- Dehydration
- Vomiting

An infection is likely caused by salmonella if symptoms begin six hours to six days after suspected ingestion. Infections typically run their course in four to seven days. Most people recover without treatment, but the infection may be severe for some and spread from the intestines to the bloodstream.

What's Next?

Check your pantry or cupboards for affected onions and throw them away. ProSource Inc. said onions were last imported on Aug. 27, but onions can last up to three months in storage, so they may still be in homes and businesses.

The CDC says that consumers should throw away all red, white or yellow onions at home that don't have a sticker or packaging. If you can't tell where the onions are from, don't buy or eat them.

If you exhibit symptoms of a salmonella infection, contact your doctor.



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