



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Multi-State *Salmonella* Outbreak Linked To Pre-cut Melons

6 cases identified in Illinois

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is reporting six cases of *Salmonella* that match a multi-state outbreak strain. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is reporting 60 cases from five states—Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, and Ohio. The CDC investigation indicates pre-cut melons, including fruit salads, are a likely source of this multistate outbreak.

“The Illinois Department of Public Health is urging people not to eat pre-cut melon purchased from any Walmart store in Illinois, or any of the other affected states, at this time,” said IDPH Director Nirav D. Shah, M.D., J.D. “If you have recently purchased pre-cut melon from Walmart, throw it out. If you have recently eaten pre-cut melon from a Walmart store and experience diarrhea, fever, and cramps, contact your health care provider.”

Illinois cases range in age from 23 to 87 years and have been reported in all regions of the state. Therefore, it is recommended that people not eat pre-cut melon from Walmart stores **anywhere** in Illinois. As the investigation continues, additional grocery stores may be added.

Most people affected by *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps 12 to 72 hours after eating food contaminated by the bacteria. The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days, and most people recover without treatment. However, diarrhea for some people may be so severe that they need to be hospitalized. The CDC has indicated there have been more hospitalizations with this outbreak than what is typically seen. The elderly, infants, and those with compromised immune systems are more likely to have a severe illness.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is working to identify the source of *Salmonella* and there may be recalls as more information is learned. Walmart stores in Illinois have removed pre-cut melons linked to this outbreak from their shelves.

So far only pre-cut melons have been linked, but it’s important to remember food safety measures if you buy whole melons. Make sure to wash the melons before you start cutting. Also make sure you’ve washed your hands and all utensils—knives and cutting boards, and don’t let fresh fruits and vegetables come into contact with raw meat.

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