



HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Epi Flash Report

Fort Bend County

Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program

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Services

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Emergency

Preparedness

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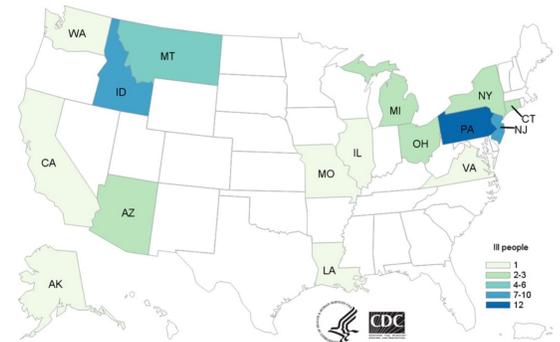


Multistate Outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7 and Possible Link to Chopped Romaine Lettuce

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and several state public health officials are investigating a multistate outbreak of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 (*E. coli* O157:H7) infections. Epidemiological evidence shows a potential link to romaine lettuce grown in Yuma, Arizona.

As of April 18, 2018, 53 people infected with that strain of *E. coli* O157:H7 have been reported from 16 states, and so far, Texas is not included. Illnesses started on dates ranging from March 22, 2018 to March 31, 2018. So far, 31 ill people have been hospitalized, including five people who developed a type of kidney failure called hemolytic uremic syndrome. No deaths have been reported.

People infected with the outbreak strain of *E. coli* O157:H7, by state of residence, as of April 18, 2018 (n=53)



The outbreak is still active and investigators believe that consumers become ill after eating salad mix products that contain chopped romaine lettuce. The CDC is advising restaurants and retailers not to sell any chopped romaine that was sources from the Yuma, Arizona area as the romaine lettuce may be contaminated. At this time, no common grower, supplier, distributor, or brand has been identified. However, if consumers intend on buying chopped romaine, the CDC is advising to confirm with the retailer the source of the lettuce and avoid any from Yuma, Arizona growing region at this time.

Supportive laboratory evidence of the outbreak is obtained by isolation of *E. coli* from specimen culture followed by further identification of the O157:H7 serotype with DNA fingerprinting. Ideally, stool specimens should be examined as soon as they are received in the laboratory. If whole stool specimens will not be processed immediately, they should be either refrigerated or frozen at -70 C as soon as possible after collection. Refrigerated specimens should be examined within 1-2 hours. If stools cannot be examined within this timeframe, they should be placed in transport medium immediately. Specimens in transport medium should be examined within 2-3 days and should be kept refrigerated. If specimens cannot be examined within 3 days, they should be frozen immediately, preferably at -70 C. Specimens should not be refrigerated for days and then frozen, or placed in transport medium and left at room temperature.

If a transport medium will be used, any of the commercially available transport media (e.g., Cary-Blair, Stuart's, Amie's, buffered glycerol saline) are satisfactory. A swab should be completely covered by the transport medium. If the medium does not cover the swab, the swab will not be kept sufficiently moist and recovery of *E. coli* O157:H7 and other organisms may be compromised.

To report confirmed or suspected cases, please use any of the following numbers:

phone: 281-342-6414 or **fax:** 281-342-7371

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Environmental & Infectious Diseases in Fort Bend County

Diseases Notified to Texas DSHS	# of Investigations Completed in March 2018	# of Cases Notified to TX DSHS in March 2018	# of Investigations Completed from 01/01/2018 to 03/31/2018	# of Cases Notified to TX DSHS from 01/01/2018 to 03/31/2018
Amebiasis	1	1	1	1
Campylobacteriosis	2	2	11	10
Carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE)	2	2	12	12
Cryptosporidiosis	1	1	1	1
Giardiasis	1	-	1	-
Influenza, human isolates	8	-	353	-
Multidrug-resistant Acinetobacter (MDR-A)	1	1	3	3
Salmonellosis	2	2	8	8
Streptococcus, invasive Group A	1	1	3	1
Streptococcus, invasive Group B	2	1	11	2
Varicella (Chickenpox)	2	2	8	8



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