

RECENT PROMINENT FOODBORNE ILLNESS OUTBREAKS

This fact sheet will highlight recent prominent foodborne illness outbreaks: what caused them and how widespread they were.

What You Should Know About Foodborne Illness Outbreaks

A group of foodborne illnesses is considered an outbreak when two or more cases of the illness occur from the same organism and are associated with either:

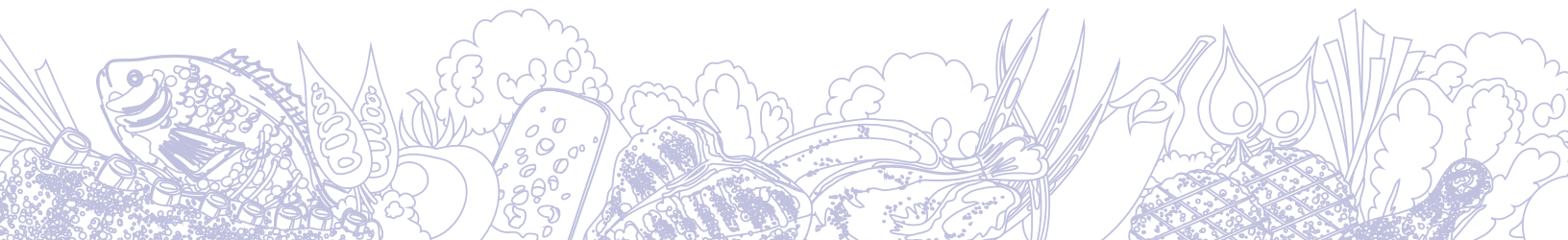
- The same food service operation, such as a restaurant, or
- The same food or drink product.

Recent Prominent Foodborne Illness Outbreaks in the United States

2006 *E. COLI* O157:H7 OUTBREAK

In 2006, an outbreak linked to spinach contaminated with shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* resulted in 199 illnesses in 26 states.

- More than 100 people were hospitalized and 3 died.
- Thirty-one developed a type of kidney failure called hemolytic-uremic syndrome (HUS).



2008 SALMONELLA OUTBREAK

A Salmonella outbreak in 2008 linked to contaminated peanut butter caused illnesses in 714 people in 46 states.

- Nearly 170 were hospitalized and the infections may have contributed to 9 deaths.

2011 LISTERIA OUTBREAK

In 2011, an outbreak of *Listeria monocytogenes* was linked to consumption of contaminated whole cantaloupes. The cantaloupes were grown on a farm in Colorado, but caused illnesses in 28 states in total.

- Even though the cantaloupes were recalled, nearly 150 people became ill, of whom 143 were hospitalized and 33 died.

2013 E. COLI O157:H7 OUTBREAK

In 2013, an outbreak of shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* O157:H7 was linked to ready-to-eat salads. A total of 33 illnesses and 7 hospitalizations were reported in 4 states.

- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) evaluated the ingredient list of the recalled salads and identified that romaine lettuce from a farm in California was a likely vehicle for the outbreak.

2014 CYCLOSPORA OUTBREAK

In 2014, 304 people became ill with *Cyclospora* infections, most of them in Texas. At least some of the illnesses among Texas residents were linked to cilantro from Mexico.

2015 SALMONELLA OUTBREAK

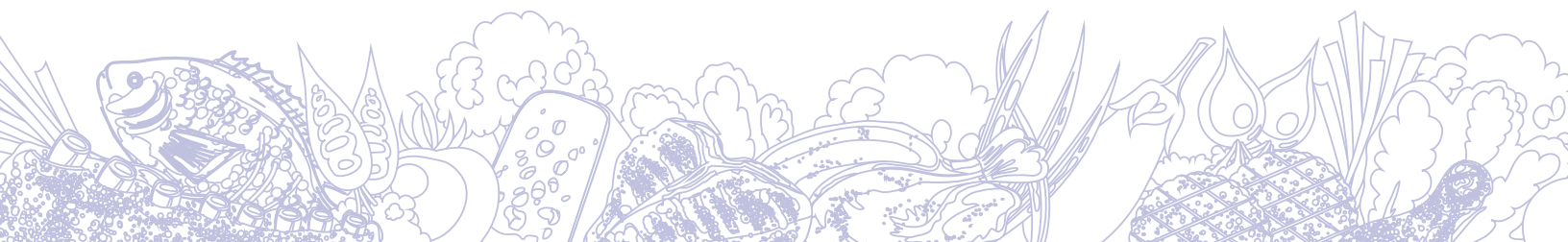
A *Salmonella* Poona outbreak that caused 907 illnesses was linked to cucumbers from Mexico.

- This massive outbreak affected 40 states, hospitalized 204 people, and caused 4 deaths.

2015 ESCHERICHIA COLI OUTBREAK

A shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 linked to commercial chicken salad caused 19 illnesses in 7 states.

- Five ill people were hospitalized, and two developed HUS, a type of kidney failure. No deaths were reported.





2016 HEPATITIS A OUTBREAK

A Hepatitis A outbreak linked to contaminated frozen strawberries caused 143 illnesses in 9 states.

- More than 50 people were hospitalized.
- Nearly all ill people reported drinking a smoothie containing strawberries from cafés located in a limited geographical area in the month before illness started.

2016 SALMONELLA OUTBREAK

Salmonella Muenchen and *Salmonella* Kentucky from alfalfa sprouts infected 32 people in 13 states.

- Ten people were hospitalized.
- One person died.
- Investigation indicated that sprouts produced by multiple sprouters from one lot of contaminated seeds were the likely source of the outbreak.
- Sprouts are a known source of foodborne illness. Children, older adults, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems should avoid eating raw sprouts of any kind (including alfalfa, clover, radish, and mung bean sprouts).

LEARN MORE

For more information on outbreaks, review the FDA's [Outbreak Investigations](#) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's [Foodborne Outbreaks](#).

