

# Multistate Outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7 Infections Linked to Romaine Lettuce

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## What's New?

- Twenty-three more ill people from 13 states were added to this investigation since the last update on May 9, 2018.
- Three more states have reported ill people: Iowa, Nebraska, and Oregon.
- CDC is updating its advice to consumers. According to the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#), the last shipments of romaine lettuce from the Yuma growing region were harvested on April 16, 2018 and the harvest season is over. It is unlikely that any romaine lettuce from the Yuma growing region is still available in stores or restaurants due to its 21-day shelf life.
- It takes two to three weeks between when a person becomes ill with *E. coli* and when the illness is reported to CDC. The most recent illnesses reported to CDC started when romaine lettuce from the Yuma growing region was likely still available in stores, restaurants, and in peoples' homes.

## Highlights

- Information collected to date indicates that romaine lettuce from the Yuma growing region could have been contaminated with Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* O157:H7 and made people sick.
- According to the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#), the last shipments of romaine lettuce from the Yuma growing region were harvested on April 16, 2018, and the harvest season is over. It is unlikely that any romaine lettuce from the Yuma growing region is still available in people's homes, stores, or restaurants due to its 21-day shelf life.
- **[Advice to Consumers:](#)**
  - If you have symptoms of an *E. coli* infection, [take action](#) and talk to your healthcare provider.
  - [Follow these steps](#) to help keep you healthy and your fruits and vegetables safer to eat.
  - Read more on [general ways to prevent \*E. coli\* infection](#). An important step is to wash hands after using the restroom or changing diapers, before and after preparing or eating food, and after contact with animals.
- **[Advice to Clinicians:](#)**
  - Antibiotics are not recommended for patients with suspected *E. coli* O157 infections until diagnostic testing can be performed and *E. coli* O157 infection is ruled out.

- CDC, public health and regulatory officials in several states, and the FDA are investigating a multistate outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7 infections.
- 172 people infected with the outbreak strain of *E. coli* O157:H7 have been reported from 32 states.
  - 75 people have been hospitalized, including 20 people who have developed a type of kidney failure called hemolytic uremic syndrome.
  - One death was reported from California.
- The [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) has identified people in several Canadian provinces infected with the same DNA fingerprint of *E. coli* O157:H7.
- This investigation is ongoing, and CDC will provide updates when more information is available.

## Case Count Update

Since the last update on May 9, 2018, 23 more ill people were added to this outbreak.

As of May 15, 2018, 172 people infected with the outbreak strain of *E. coli* O157:H7 have been reported from 32 states. A list of the states and the number of cases in each can be found on the [Case Count Map page](#). Illnesses started on dates ranging from [March 13, 2018 to May 2, 2018](#). Ill people range in age from 1 to 88 years, with a median age of 29. Sixty-five percent of ill people are female. Of 157 people with information available, 75 (48%) have been hospitalized, including 20 people who developed hemolytic uremic syndrome, a type of kidney failure. One death was reported from California.

Illnesses that occurred after April 21, 2018, might not yet be reported due to the time it takes between when a person becomes ill with *E. coli* and when the illness is reported. This takes an average of [two to three weeks](#).

## Investigation Update

According to the [FDA](#), the last shipments of romaine lettuce from the Yuma growing region were harvested on April 16, 2018, and the harvest season is over. It is unlikely that any romaine lettuce from the Yuma growing region is still available in people's homes, stores, or restaurants due to its 21-day shelf life. The most recent illnesses reported to CDC started when romaine lettuce from the Yuma growing region was likely still available in stores, restaurants, and in peoples' homes. This investigation is ongoing, and CDC will provide more information as it becomes available.