

## Multistate Outbreak of *Salmonella* Reading Infections Linked to Raw Turkey Products

The New Jersey Department of Health is working with the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), public health and regulatory officials in several states investigating a multistate outbreak of multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* infections linked to raw turkey products.

As of July 11, 2018, 90 people with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Reading have been infected from 26 states. Thirty-seven (61%) of 61 people interviewed reported preparing or eating turkey products that were purchased raw, including ground turkey, turkey pieces, and whole turkey. NJ currently has five confirmed cases associated with this outbreak, in Essex, Mercer (2), Middlesex and Monmouth. To date, three of the five New Jersey cases interviewed reported eating turkey. Additional details on this outbreak can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/reading-07-18/index.html>

The outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Reading has been identified in samples from raw turkey pet food in Minnesota, from raw turkey products from 19 slaughter and 6 processing establishments, and from live turkeys from several states. Available data indicate that this strain of *Salmonella* Reading may be present in live turkeys and in raw turkey products. A single, common supplier of raw turkey products or of live turkeys has not been identified. CDC and U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA-FSIS) shared the results of the investigation with representatives from the turkey industry to make them aware of the outbreak and resulting illnesses, and to ask them about steps they may be taking to reduce *Salmonella* contamination. Further investigation, interventions and education messages will target both the live turkey industry and turkey processing facilities. Consumers should be aware that raw turkey may be contaminated with germs. Raw turkey should always be handled carefully and cooked thoroughly to an internal temperature of 165°F and leftovers should also be reheated to 165°F. Hands, counters, cutting boards and utensils should be washed thoroughly with warm, soapy water after touching raw turkey or raw meats to prevent *Salmonella* infection. CDC also does not recommend feeding raw diets to pets. Good hygiene practices such as washing hands thoroughly before preparing or eating foods, after contact with animals or after changing diapers or using the restroom can also reduce food borne illnesses.

*Salmonella* Reading is one of many different serotypes of *Salmonella* bacteria, which all cause similar illnesses. Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever and abdominal cramps between 12 - 72 hours after infection and illness typically lasts 4 to 7 days. Individuals usually recover even without treatment however in some people, the diarrhea may be severe enough to require hospitalization. We encourage people to contact their health care provider if they have diarrhea that lasts for more than 3 days or if diarrhea is accompanied by high fever, blood in the stool, or so much vomiting that they cannot keep liquids down and they pass very little urine. *Salmonella* infection may spread from the intestines to the bloodstream and then to other places in the body. Children younger than 5 years, adults older than 65 years, and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to have severe illness.

This investigation is ongoing and additional updates will be provided as more information becomes available.