

US death toll from cantaloupe rises to 23

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An outbreak of listeria in farm-grown cantaloupes has killed 23 people and sickened 116 more in the United States since late July, health authorities said Wednesday.

A woman who was pregnant and fell ill with listeriosis after eating a contaminated cantaloupe has also miscarried, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) said in its latest update.

Illnesses have been reported in 25 states due to the cantaloupes originating from Colorado-based Jensen Farms, the CDC said. A recall was issued on September 14 and all the affected fruit should be off store shelves by now.

"More ill persons may be reported because of the time lag between diagnosis and laboratory confirmation and also because up to two months can elapse between eating [contaminated food](#) and developing listeriosis," the CDC warned.

The cases mark the worst US foodborne disease outbreak in more than a decade, and the first time listeria has been found in whole melons. Investigators are still trying to find out how the contamination occurred.

Listeriosis is particularly dangerous to the elderly, those with weakened immune systems and pregnant women because it can cause miscarriage or stillbirth.

Only cantaloupes from Jensen Farms have been implicated in the

outbreak, and none were shipped outside the United States.

Listeriosis can cause diarrhea, fever, muscle aches and other flu-like symptoms. In most people, the bacteria spreads from the intestine to the bloodstream, but it can be treated with antibiotics.

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