

CDC: Multistate hepatitis A virus outbreak reported

June 7 2013



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(HealthDay)—A multistate outbreak of hepatitis A illnesses, possibly linked to a frozen berry and pomegranate mix, has been identified, according to a report published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Researchers from the CDC, in collaboration with [public health officials](#) in several states and the U.S. [Food and Drug Administration](#), are investigating the outbreak, which has affected 49 people in five states as of June 4, 2013.

Based on epidemiological investigation of 26 cases (age 2 to 71 years), the researchers note that 60 percent of those affected were women.

Forty-four percent of ill people were hospitalized. The majority of ill people (76 percent) reported eating "Townsend Farms Organic Anti-Oxidant Blend" frozen berry and pomegranate mix. Most of these people reported purchasing the product from Costco markets. The product contained ingredients from the United States, Argentina, Chile, and Turkey. Preliminary laboratory studies of specimens from two cases indicate that the outbreak strain is genotype 1B of the [hepatitis A virus](#), which circulates in the North Africa and Middle East regions, and is rarely seen in the Americas.

"Hepatitis A is a human disease and usually occurs when an infected food handler prepares food without appropriate [hand hygiene](#)," according to the CDC. "However, food contaminated with hepatitis A virus, as is suspected in this outbreak, can cause outbreaks of disease among persons who eat or handle food."

More information: [More Information](#)

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