

Puppy poop infection tally rises to 67 people in 15 states

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(HealthDay) —An outbreak of a potentially deadly bacteria linked to

contaminated puppy poop has spread to 15 states, a new federal report shows.

These multidrug-resistant *Campylobacter* infections have now sickened 67 people.

In the latest update from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the agency said cases rose from 39 in mid-September to 67 reported by Oct. 30. Ninety-three percent of these infections have been connected to puppies sold at Petland stores.

"Evidence suggests that puppies sold through Petland are a likely source of this outbreak," the CDC said in a news release issued in September. "Petland is cooperating with public health and animal health officials to address this outbreak."

Of the 62 patients for whom there was available information, 17 (27 percent) have been hospitalized, the CDC said in an Oct. 30 news release.

Campylobacter infections linked to the puppies have now been reported between September 2016 and October 2017 in Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Missouri, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, Wisconsin and Wyoming, the CDC said. Ohio has the most cases, with 24 infections reported.

Campylobacter is a bacteria that causes people to develop diarrhea (sometimes bloody), cramping, abdominal pain and fever within two to five days of exposure to the organism, said Dr. Sophia Jan, director of general pediatrics at Cohen Children's Medical Center, in New Hyde Park, N.Y.

This is a common cause of diarrhea in the United States, she said.

"The illness typically lasts about a week without treatment," Jan said. But for people with compromised immune systems, *Campylobacter* infections can be life-threatening, she added.

Most cases in humans occur from eating raw or undercooked chicken, or eating foods that have been cross-contaminated by infected poultry products, Jan said.

However, humans can get infected from contact with the stool of an infected puppy, she added.

Almost all of the people sickened in this outbreak have been Petland employees, while others had either bought a Petland puppy, shopped at Petland or visited someone who had purchased a puppy from Petland, the CDC said.

Infected dogs may or may not show signs of illness—such as diarrhea, vomiting or a fever—so it's important to take precautions when around dogs, the CDC advises.

To prevent catching *Campylobacter* from dogs, the CDC recommends that you:

- Wash your hands thoroughly after touching dogs, their poop or their food. Take extra care that children wash their hands carefully after playing with puppies or [dogs](#).
- Pick up and dispose of dog poop, especially in areas where children might play.
- Contact your veterinarian if you notice any signs of illness in your puppy or dog.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention has more on [Campylobacter](#).

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