

More cases in E. coli outbreak tied to Wendy's restaurant lettuce

September 2 2022



A total of 97 people across six states have now been made ill by [E. coli](#),

in an outbreak possibly tied to contaminated lettuce used in sandwiches sold at Wendy's restaurants.

"Since the last update on August 25, 2022, 13 more illnesses have been reported to CDC," the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in an updated [statement](#) released Thursday. Two states—Kentucky and New York (with one case each)—have now been added to the list of states reporting cases, which also includes Michigan (58 cases), Ohio (24), Indiana (11) and Pennsylvania (2).

Illnesses from infection with the gastrointestinal bacterium have often been severe.

"Of 81 people with information available, 43 have been hospitalized and 10 developed [hemolytic uremic syndrome](#), a serious condition that can cause [kidney failure](#)," the CDC said, although "no deaths have been reported."

The exact source of the outbreak has still not been officially confirmed, but the CDC said that in 67 cases where investigators asked what people had eaten in the week prior to becoming ill, 81% reported that they had eaten at Wendy's.

"Of 54 people with detailed information about what they ate at Wendy's, 37 [69%] reported eating [romaine lettuce](#) served on burgers and sandwiches," the agency noted.

On Aug. 19, Wendy's announced that it had removed romaine lettuce from its sandwiches in Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

"Wendy's is taking the precautionary measure of removing the romaine lettuce being used in sandwiches from restaurants in that region," the CDC said at the time. "Investigators are working to confirm whether

romaine lettuce is the source of this outbreak, and whether romaine lettuce used in Wendy's sandwiches was served or sold at other businesses."

Romaine lettuce sold in [grocery stores](#) does not appear to be affected, the CDC said, and people can still eat at Wendy's and eat the romaine lettuce in the salads it sells. Wendy's explained in a [statement](#) that the lettuce used in its salads is not the same as that used in its sandwiches.

"We are fully cooperating with public health authorities on their ongoing investigation of the regional E. coli outbreak reported in certain midwestern states," the company said at the time. "While the CDC has not yet confirmed a specific food as the source of that [outbreak](#), we are taking the precaution of discarding and replacing the sandwich lettuce at some restaurants in that region."

Most people with an E. coli infection "start feeling sick 3 to 4 days after eating or drinking something that contains the bacteria," the CDC said. "However, illnesses can start anywhere from 1 to 10 days after exposure." Illnesses typically last from 5 to 7 days.

What to Do:

- Watch for symptoms of severe E. coli, which include [diarrhea](#) lasting more than three days or diarrhea accompanied by a fever higher than 102°F, bloody diarrhea, vomiting and a lack of urination.
- If you suffer from these symptoms, call your doctor immediately.
- Keep track of what and where you ate in the week before you got sick and report it to your local or state health department.

More information: For more on the outbreak, head to the [U.S.](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.](#)

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Citation: More cases in E. coli outbreak tied to Wendy's restaurant lettuce (2022, September 2)
retrieved 6 May 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-09-cases-coli-outbreak-tied-wendy.html>

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