

Botulism outbreak tied to nacho cheese kills 1, sickens 9

23 May 2017

A botulism outbreak linked to contaminated nacho-cheese dip sold at a Northern California gas station has killed one man and left at least nine other people hospitalized, health officials said.

The San Francisco County coroner's office identified the dead man as Martin Galindo-Larios Jr., 37. Matt Conens, a spokesman for the California Department of Public Health, declined to release further information on the death, the condition of the other victims, or the status and extent of the investigation into the weeks-old outbreak.

Family members of Galindo-Larios did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment. An online fundraising page said the man had been married and the father of two small children.

Tests have confirmed the [botulism toxin](#) was present in nacho-cheese dip sold at a gas station in the Sacramento suburb of Walnut Grove, the state health agency said Monday in a statement.

The agency said last week that the container and cheese dip were removed May 5 and that authorities believe the contamination posed no further risk to the public.

Wisconsin-based [food](#) distributor Gehl Foods said it had been notified by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration that the company's nacho cheese was among the products that inspectors seized at the [gas station](#).

"We immediately retested samples from the relevant lot of cheese, and it remains clear of any contamination," the company said in a statement.

The manufacturer said an independent lab also found no sign of the toxin in the samples tested there. There is no recall of the nacho [cheese](#) product, the company said.

Botulism, a comparatively rare kind of food poisoning, can lead to paralysis, breathing difficulty and sometimes death. Survivors often need to spend weeks or months on ventilators to help them breathe.

A major outbreak of foodborne [botulism](#) stemmed from a church potluck in Ohio in 2015, when at least 29 people fell ill. Authorities blamed potato salad made from potatoes that had been canned improperly at home.

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