

Peanut Butter-Associated Outbreak of *Salmonella* Typhimurium

To: Health Care Providers

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The Vermont Department of Health is collaborating with public health officials in other states, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to investigate a multistate outbreak of human infections due to *Salmonella* serotype Typhimurium. As of Sunday, January 18, 2009, 475 persons infected with the outbreak strain have been reported from 43 states and Canada. There have been four cases among Vermonters.

The investigation is ongoing, and exposures to peanut butter and other peanut butter-containing products are being examined. Preliminary analysis of an epidemiologic study conducted by CDC and state public health officials in early January indicates that peanut butter is a likely source of the infections. **To date, no association has been found with major national brand name jars of peanut butter sold in grocery stores.**

The list of peanut butter-containing products that may be affected is still being determined and is incomplete at this time. However, the list of currently recalled products can be found on the FDA website at <http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/salmonellatyph.html#update>.

CDC and FDA recommendations include:

- Do not eat products that have been recalled, and throw them away in a manner that prevents others from eating them.
- Postpone eating other peanut butter-containing products (such as cookies, crackers, cereal, candy and ice cream) until more information becomes available about which brands may be affected.

The Vermont Department of Health will only test unopened peanut butter-containing products from confirmed cases.

Consider bacterial enteric pathogens in the differential diagnosis of patients presenting with compatible clinical symptoms. The Vermont Department of Health Laboratory provides stool testing for bacterial enteric pathogens at no charge. Once pathogenic organisms have been isolated and identified, they are further discriminated by serotype. In addition, *Salmonella* isolates are further characterized by pulsed field gel electrophoresis in the molecular lab.

To arrange for enteric pathogen testing, contact the Infectious Disease Section at 802-863-7240 or 1-800-640-4374 [in Vermont]. An epidemiologist is available 24/7.