

New Mexico Department of Health

City of Albuquerque  
Environmental Health Department

New Mexico Environment  
Department



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### **New Mexico Department of Health, City of Albuquerque Environmental Health Department, and New Mexico Environment Department Investigate Salmonella Cluster**

(Santa Fe) – The New Mexico Department of Health, the City of Albuquerque Environmental Health Department, and the New Mexico Environment Department are jointly investigating a cluster of illness caused by *Salmonella* paratyphi. There have been six confirmed cases reported in New Mexico residents, with onsets of illness from April 4 to May 1, 2015. Five individuals reside in Bernalillo County and one resides in Sandoval County. The cases range in age from 23 to 68 years, and one individual was hospitalized as a result of the illness.

At this time, investigation is still ongoing regarding the source of the outbreak. Five out of the six people reported eating sushi containing raw fish. The City of Albuquerque Environmental Health Department and the New Mexico Environment Department are investigating possible exposures linked to sushi. Federal agencies including the CDC and other states are also involved in the investigation following additional illnesses associated with the same *Salmonella* paratyphi strain in their respective jurisdictions.

“People at risk of severe illness associated with *Salmonella* paratyphi, including the elderly and very young and anyone who is immunocompromised, are urged to not consume any raw seafood product,” advises Department of Health Cabinet Secretary Retta Ward, MPH. “Anyone with nausea, diarrhea (with or without blood), abdominal cramping and fever, especially after recently eating raw fish, should seek medical attention. Healthcare providers are advised to get stool cultures from patients presenting with diarrhea and fever.”

The most common sources of *Salmonella* infection are undercooked poultry, eggs, and meat. Pet birds and reptiles as well as other pets with diarrhea can transmit *Salmonella*. To prevent illness, thorough hand washing with soap and water prior to food preparation or consumption is recommended. *Salmonella* can be killed by cooking foods to an internal temperature of 165°F. Therefore, consumers of raw or undercooked fish and meat products may be at increased risk of illness.

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Any provider who suspects a patient is ill with Salmonella can contact the New Mexico Department of Health's on call epidemiologist at 505-827-0006 24 hours a day, seven days a week.