



## Public Health Notice – Outbreak of *Salmonella* infections linked to frozen raw breaded chicken products

June 28, 2015

### ***Why you should take note***

The Public Health Agency of Canada is collaborating with provincial public health partners, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, and Health Canada to investigate an outbreak of *Salmonella* infections in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador with cases of human illness linked to frozen raw breaded chicken products.

*Salmonella* is commonly found in raw chicken and frozen raw breaded chicken products. The risk to Canadians is low, and illnesses can be avoided if safe food handling, preparation and cooking practices are followed when preparing these types of food products.

### ***Investigation Summary***

Currently there are 44 cases of *Salmonella* illness in four provinces: Ontario (28), Quebec (12), Nova Scotia (2), and Newfoundland and Labrador (2). Twelve people have been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported. Individuals became sick between February 7 and May 23, 2015. Based on the investigation findings to date, exposure to frozen raw breaded chicken products has emerged as a source of illness.

### ***Who is most at risk***

Anyone can become sick with a *Salmonella* infection, but infants, children, seniors and those with weakened immune systems are at higher risk of serious illness because their immune systems are more fragile than healthy individuals.

Most people who become ill from a *Salmonella* infection will recover fully after a few days. It is possible for some people to be infected with the bacteria and not get sick or show any symptoms, but still be able to spread the infection to others.

### ***What you should do to protect your health***

If you are preparing frozen raw breaded chicken products there are precautions you should take to protect your health.

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water before and after handling raw poultry products.



- Use a separate plate, cutting board, and utensils when handling raw poultry products to prevent the spread of harmful bacteria.
- Frozen raw breaded chicken products may appear to be pre-cooked or browned, but some contain raw chicken and should be handled and prepared no differently than raw poultry products.
- Do not eat raw or undercooked poultry products. Cook all frozen, stuffed, breaded or raw poultry products to an internal temperature of at least 74°C (165°F) to ensure they are safe to eat. Whole poultry should be cooked to an internal temperature of 82°C (180°F).
- Due to uneven heating, microwave cooking of frozen raw breaded poultry products including chicken nuggets, strips or burgers is not recommended. Always follow package cooking instructions, including products labelled *Uncooked, Cook and Serve, Ready to Cook, and Oven Ready*.

### ***Symptoms***

Symptoms of a *Salmonella* infection, called salmonellosis, typically start 6 to 72 hours after exposure to *Salmonella* bacteria from an infected animal or contaminated product.

Symptoms include:

- fever
- chills
- diarrhea
- abdominal cramps
- headache
- nausea
- vomiting

These symptoms usually last four to seven days. In healthy people, salmonellosis often clears up without treatment. In some cases severe illness and hospitalization may occur. People who are infected with *Salmonella* bacteria can be infectious from several days to several weeks. People who experience symptoms, or who have underlying medical conditions, should contact their health care providers if they suspect they have a *Salmonella* infection.

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### ***What the Government of Canada is doing***

The Government of Canada is committed to food safety. The Public Health Agency of Canada is leading the human health investigation of this outbreak and is in regular contact with its federal and provincial partners to monitor and take



collaborative steps to address the outbreak. Health Canada provides food-related health risk assessments to determine if the presence of a certain substance or microorganism poses a health risk to consumers. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) conducts food safety investigations into the possible food source of an outbreak. The Government of Canada will continue to update Canadians as new information related to this investigation becomes available.

### ***Additional information***

- [Information Update: Frozen Raw Breaded Poultry Products](#)
- [Salmonella Fact Sheet](#)
- [Poultry Safety Fact Sheet](#)
- [General Food Safety Tips](#)
- [Befoodsafe.ca](#)

### ***Media Contact***

**Public Health Agency of Canada**  
Media Relations  
(613) 957-2983