



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

NEWS RELEASE

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COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT ADVISES CONSUMERS NOT TO EAT FRESH, BAGGED SPINACH DUE TO MULTI-STATE E. COLI OUTBREAK

There are No Confirmed Cases in San Diego County

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) today warns consumers not to eat pre-packaged fresh spinach because it may be linked to the multi-state outbreak of E. coli. Locally, no cases have been reported, although the California Department of Health Services has reported an illness in the state that may be associated with the outbreak.

"While there have been no local cases reported, HHSA is recommending that people refrain from eating bagged fresh spinach," said Dr. Wilma Wooten, County of San Diego Deputy Public Health Officer. "This is a precaution as the investigation continues to identify the exact source of the outbreak. The safest thing is to simply not eat bagged fresh spinach."

The County has also alerted local physicians to be aware of persons with E. coli symptoms, report any suspected cases, and submit stool samples.

This type of E. coli infection causes nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, and bloody diarrhea. There maybe little or no fever, and the illness typically resolves itself in five to 10 days; however, a small percentage of infected individuals may develop a more serious condition in which red blood cells are destroyed and kidney failure may occur. Those most at risk for serious complications of this food-borne illness include young children, the elderly and those with compromised immune systems.

"If someone has consumed spinach and develops any of these symptoms, they should immediately seek medical care," said Wooten.

The federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is coordinating a multi-state investigation and is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to identify possible sources of the bagged spinach associated with this outbreak.

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