



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Region IV Public Health
Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, Wahkiakum counties
and Cowlitz Tribe

Health Advisory

Please deliver a copy of the accompanying alert to each provider in your organization.

Thank you

Questions regarding this alert may be directed to the office of:

Alan Melnick, MD, MPH
Health Officer

Clark County Public Health
Cowlitz County Health Department
Skamania County Health Department
Wahkiakum County Department of Health and Human Services
(360) 397-8412

Please Distribute

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for specific incident for situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.



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HEALTH ADVISORY

October 9, 2012

TO: Physicians and other Healthcare Providers

FROM: Alan Melnick, MD, MPH, CPH, Health Officer

RE: Update to October 5 advisory on Salmonella in patrons of "On the Border" restaurant in Vancouver

Since sending our October 5 provider advisory about Salmonella cases among patrons of *On the Border* restaurant in Vancouver, we have been notified of an additional 5 confirmed cases and 5 probable cases, suggesting that there could be ongoing transmission.

We are enclosing the text of a news release we sent to the media today announcing the closure of the restaurant and encouraging patrons who ate there between September 20 and October 8 to contact their health care provider. If you are contacted by someone who ate at *On the Border* restaurant in Vancouver during that time and who experienced Salmonella symptoms, please notify Clark County Public Health at 360-397-8182. Following the news release, we have also enclosed the text of the provider advisory we sent to you on October 5:

News release sent by Clark County Public Health on October 9, 2012:

Public health closes restaurant to investigate, stop spread of Salmonella

Vancouver, WA— Clark County Public Health is investigating several *Salmonella* cases among patrons of On the Border restaurant, located at 1505 SE 164th Ave. Anyone who ate at the restaurant between Sept. 20 and Oct. 8 and is experiencing symptoms of salmonella should contact a health care provider.

Salmonella symptoms can include severe diarrhea, bloody diarrhea, fever, chills, abdominal discomfort and occasionally vomiting. The symptoms generally appear one to three days after exposure. Most people recover on their own without medication.

"We closed the restaurant this morning as a further precaution to reduce the risk of Salmonella spreading to others," said Dr. Alan Melnick, Clark County Health Officer. "Our staff is interviewing employees and patrons to learn more about the possible source of the outbreak, such as a contaminated food source. We're also working with restaurant staff to make sure standard control measures are in place, such as sanitary surfaces and equipment, frequent hand-washing and proper food handling and storage. Restaurant staff has been very cooperative."

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Eleven confirmed cases and five probable cases involved patrons of the restaurant. Although the risk of infection to the general public is low, Salmonella could spread if infected people don't wash their hands properly after using the bathroom. People with salmonella should also stay home until their symptoms have disappeared.

Salmonella is a common bacterial infection. People are most often infected by eating or drinking contaminated food or water or by contact with infected people or animals. Salmonella is typically a food-borne illness acquired from contaminated raw poultry, eggs, and unpasteurized milk and cheese products. It can get on food or other objects and then into someone else's mouth which can result in infection.

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Text of provider advisory sent on October 5, 2012:

TO: Physicians and Other Health Care Providers
FROM: Rachel Wood, MD, Health Officer
RE: Salmonella in Patrons of "On the Border" Restaurant in Vancouver, WA

Clark County Public Health is investigating 6 lab-confirmed cases of Salmonella. The species and subtypes are pending. The only identified link between all of the cases is patronage at the "On the Border" Restaurant in Vancouver, Washington. All reported eating at the restaurant during the dates of 9/20/12 through 9/25/12. Illness onset ranged from several hours to five days during the dates of 9/24/12 through 9/30/12. At this point in our investigation, it is not known whether the source of infection is from a food source or a person.

Please consider Salmonella in your differential diagnosis for patients who have diarrhea and report eating at On the Border Restaurant within 1-2 weeks of symptom onset. We request that you test for enteric pathogens in these individuals and call us at (360) 397-8022. If you need immediate assistance with a patient, please call our CD on-call nurse at (360) 518-3366.

At this time, we are investigating to determine if there is ongoing exposure beyond 9/25/12 or if any other restaurants are involved.

Thank you for your partnership.

To report other notifiable conditions or if you have questions, please call:

- Clark County Public Health: (360) 397-8182
- Cowlitz County Health and Human Services: (360) 414-5599
- Skamania County Community Health: (509) 427-3850
- Wahkiakum County Health and Human Services (360) 795-6207

Thank you for your partnership.