

Important Health Notice

August 5, 2009

Information for Healthcare Professionals

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LISTERIOSIS

This Important Health Notice (IHN) is based on current information received to date and provides the following:

- Food recall
- Awareness of Listeriosis

Status Update:

On July 30, 2009, a Canadian Integrated Outbreak Surveillance Centre (CIOSC) Alert was issued by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) in conjunction with an active food safety investigation at the Hamilton site of the Ontario Maple Leaf Food Plant.

The PHAC is closely monitoring the *Listeria* investigation. There has been no increase in cases of Listeriosis at this time or any detected cases linked to this investigation. However, because of the long incubation period of Listeriosis (median incubation period is 30 days) and time needed for laboratory confirmation, this could be the reflection of expected delay of cases appearing in surveillance systems.

On August 3, 2009, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) issued a Health Hazard Alert warning the public not to consume certain Maple Leaf /Shopsy's and Hygrade frankfurter/wiener products that may be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*. Maple Leaf Foods, the manufacturer, is voluntarily recalling the affected products from the marketplace.

A list of affected products is available at:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/corpaffr/recarap>

Highlights:

- On August 3, 2009, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) issued an alert warning the public not to consume certain Maple Leaf/Shopsy's and Hygrade frankfurter/wiener products that may be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*.
- Maple Leaf Foods is voluntarily recalling the affected products from the marketplace.
- The CFIA is monitoring the effectiveness of the recall and has requested the assistance of health units.
- Health care professionals are asked to be aware of Listeriosis, a food borne infection, as a potential cause of illness.

[p/2009/20090803e.shtml](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/corpaffr/recarap/p/2009/20090803e.shtml). There have been no reported illnesses associated with the consumption of these products. There is no increase in *Listeria* cases for Ontario at this time.

As a precaution, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has asked local public health unit staff to:

- 1) contact or conduct spot checks of summer camps, daycares and other high risk facilities that may have the products available;
- 2) look for affected products (that might be for sale) during the course of routine inspections of food premises by health inspectors;

Healthcare Professionals

Healthcare professionals should monitor for potential clinical cases of Listeriosis and advise the local health unit of suspected cases.

Listeriosis can manifest as a mild febrile illness in healthy hosts or as meningo-encephalitis and/or septicemia in adults and as fever and abortion in pregnant women. Children and young adults are generally resistant and adults over the age of 40 less resistant, especially the immunocompromised and the elderly.

Additional information, including clinical and specimen collection guidelines from the 2008 Listeriosis outbreak, is available at:

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/disease/listeria_mn.html

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care will continue to work with its partners and monitor the ongoing investigation.

(original signed by)

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