



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Multi-State Outbreak of Salmonella Traced to Frozen Chicken and Rice Dinners

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BURLINGTON – The Department of Health is advising of a multi-state outbreak of foodborne illness traced to a brand of frozen chicken meals distributed nationwide. There are currently no reported cases of illness in Vermont related to the outbreak.

If anyone in Vermont has purchased Marie Callender's brand Cheesy Chicken and Rice single serve frozen entrees, the meals should be thrown away.

The product has been linked to 30 cases of Salmonella Chester in 15 states since April 11, 2010, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The only state in New England with reported cases are two in Massachusetts.

Salmonella is sometimes found in raw foods such as chicken that can be used as ingredients in frozen dinners that require further cooking. When cooking a frozen dinner, consumers should follow the directions on the package carefully. Microwave ovens vary in strength, and cooking time may need to be adjusted depending on the wattage of the microwave oven. Conventional ovens are better at cooking foods uniformly.

Symptoms of foodborne illness caused by Salmonella include fever, diarrhea and abdominal cramps. Salmonella can invade the bloodstream and cause life-threatening infections for people with weakened immune systems or other underlying health conditions. Consult a healthcare provider if you develop symptoms of salmonellosis after consuming one of these meals.

ConAgra Foods Packaged Foods, LLC, the manufacturer of the product, announced a precautionary recall on June 17, 2010. For more information on the outbreak visit www.cdc.gov/salmonella/chester.

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