Strawberries May Be to Blame for Hepatitis A Outbreak

The FDA is investigating the source of an outbreak that has led to 12 hospitalizations.

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The Food and Drug Administration is investigating a potential link between a hepatitis A outbreak and fresh organic strawberries.

The contaminated strawberries were sold between March 5 and April 2 and branded as FreshKampo and HEB, according to the FDA, in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and state and local partners.

Between March 28 and April 30, 17 hepatitis cases were identified in California, Minnesota and North Dakota; 12 of these led to hospitalization, according to the FDA. Ongoing traceback investigations show that cases in California, Minnesota and Canada were linked to the consumption of strawberries.

The fruits were distributed nationwide and sold at Trader Joe's, Walmart, Aldi, HEB, Kroger, Safeway, Sprouts Farmers Market, Weis Markets and WinCo Foods, among others.

While the potentially affected strawberries are now past their shelf life, anyone who froze them for later use should not consume them, the FDA said. Anyone unsure of which brand they purchased or when should dispose the product.

The FDA recommends that anyone who isn't vaccinated against hepatitis A and bought and consumed the strawberries in the past two weeks should speak with a health care professional to see whether post-exposure prophylaxis is needed. Anyone who thinks they have symptoms should also contact their health care provider.

Symptoms generally appear within two to seven weeks after infection and typically last less than two months, according to the CDC. Symptoms can include yellow skin or eyes, lack of appetite, upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, fever, joint pain, dark urine, light-colored stools and fatigue. Adults are more likely than children to experience.

To learn more about hepatitis A, visit Hep's Hepatitis A Basics page. And visit Hep's Hepatitis A in

America map to see if hepatitis A is active in your community.

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