

CARIBBEAN EPIDEMIOLOGY CENTRE (CAREC)



*Pan American Sanitary Bureau, Regional Office of the
World Health Organization*
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CAREC ALERT!

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US FIRM RECALLS TOTINO'S AND JENO'S FROZEN PIZZAS WITH PEPPERONI TOPPINGS DUE TO POSSIBLE CONTAMINATION WITH E. COLI O157

The Tennessee State Department of Health and the US CDC are collaborating with public health officials in multiple states and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA-FSIS) to investigate an ongoing multistate outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7 infections in humans. A study showed that eating frozen pizza that contained pepperoni, produced by the General Mills Company under the brand names of Totino's or Jeni's was the likely source of the illness.

As of November 1st, at least 21 isolates of *E. coli* O157:H7 with an indistinguishable genetic fingerprint have been collected from ill persons in 10 states. At least 8 people have been hospitalized, and 4 have developed hemolytic-uremic syndrome (HUS). No deaths have been reported. Most people infected with *E. coli* O157:H7 develop severe bloody diarrhoea and abdominal cramps 2-8 days (average of 3-4 days) after infection.

Source of information:

<http://www.cdc.gov/print.do?url=http://www.cdc.gov/ecoli/2007/october/103107.html>

Further information on the specific products under recall can be found at:

http://www.generalmills.com/corporate/media_center/news_release_detail.aspx?itemID=29007&catID=227

At this time it could not be determined whether any of these products had been exported to any CAREC member countries. However, the same advice that has been given to consumers in the US is recommended for consumers in CAREC member countries, i.e. they should not eat recalled Totino's or Jeni's brand frozen pizzas that contain pepperoni as a topping. Anyone who has eaten the product but did not become ill need not take any special action. People who are ill with diarrhoea within a week of consuming this type of frozen pizza should seek medical care and let their doctor know about the exposure.