

TO: Media
FROM: Dr. Rosana Pellizzari
RE: Listeria in Peterborough
DATE: August 21, 2008 (revised)

Peterborough County-City Health Unit is warning the public that persons at high risk, pregnant women and their unborn or newborn children, the elderly, and people with weakened immune systems, should not consume deli meats implicated in the ongoing Canadian Food Inspection Agency recall. Some consumers may have purchased these products at deli counters and may not be able to determine the source. These people are advised to discard or return these products to the point of purchase.

For a complete listing of the 23 products being recalled, go to <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/corpaffr/recarapp/2008/20080819e.shtml>.

The Peterborough County-City Health Unit is aware of 2 cases that may be linked to this outbreak and both have died. Listeria was listed as contributing to the cause of death in 1 case. Both Peterborough cases were residents of long term care homes and both were known to have underlying chronic illness that could have comprised their immune response. The health unit is still awaiting results of genetic fingerprinting.

The health unit has issued a surveillance alert to all health care providers. In addition, Public Health Inspectors have been working with the hospital and area long term care facilities to ensure that the affected products are not currently being served.

The cause of the outbreak is still under investigation. Maple Leaf has closed its GTA facility for cleaning and has voluntarily recalled 23 products after five samples of products from two lines at the Burlington plant tested positive for Listeria. These turkey, pork and beef products may have been sold to institutions, food outlets and retailers in the Peterborough area.

Pregnant women infected with Listeria can experience miscarriage, stillbirth and premature labour. Newborns infected with Listeria can develop meningitis. Listeria can cause life-threatening illness such as meningitis and septicemia in immunocompromised individuals.

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For more information, contact:

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