

Communicable Diseases Weekly Report

Week 45, 7 November to 13 November 2021

In summary, we report:

- [Listeriosis](#) – two new cases
- [Novel coronavirus 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Summary of notifiable conditions activity in NSW](#)

For further information see NSW Health [infectious diseases page](#). This includes links to other NSW Health [infectious disease surveillance reports](#) and a [diseases data page](#) for a range of notifiable infectious diseases.

Listeriosis

Two new infections of *Listeria* (listeriosis) were reported this week. The first case was a person in their 80s who is a dialysis patient and had *Listeria monocytogenes* isolated on blood culture. A food history for this case has not yet been ascertained.

The second case was a person in their 60s who had onset of intermittent fever in early November and had *Listeria monocytogenes* isolated on blood culture. They are on immunosuppressive therapies, which can increase susceptibility to *Listeria* infection. The case reported consuming numerous high risk foods within their exposure period including pre-cut fruits, bagged salad, cold pre-cooked meats and sliced deli meats. Typing and whole genome sequencing for both cases is pending.

There have been 21 cases of listeriosis in the year to date, compared to 14 cases for the same time period in the two previous years. All isolates from listeriosis cases in NSW undergo whole genome sequencing and results are analysed against other infections in other states and territories. None of the cases in NSW in 2021 to date have been linked to any other listeriosis cases identified this year.

Listeriosis is a rare illness caused by eating food contaminated with a bacterium called *Listeria monocytogenes*. This bacterium is widespread throughout nature, being commonly carried by many species of both domestic and wild animals. *Listeria* survive refrigeration but are killed at cooking temperatures.

Outbreaks of illness have been associated with raw milk, soft cheeses, pre-prepared salads (for example, from salad bars), unwashed raw vegetables, pâté, cold diced chicken, pre-cut fruit, fruit salad and most recently rockmelon.

Babies can be born with listeriosis if their mothers eat contaminated food during the pregnancy.

People at increased risk of listeriosis include pregnant women and their unborn children, babies, older people and people with weakened immune systems, such as people on cancer treatment or steroids, or those living with diabetes, kidney disease, liver disease or HIV infection. Listeriosis may be severe in these individuals, and infections during pregnancy may cause still birth or premature delivery.

People at increased risk of listeriosis should not eat the following foods:

- rockmelon (cantaloupe)
- pre-cut fruit, including fruit salad
- pre-packed cold salads, including coleslaw
- frozen vegetables, unless cooked prior to consumption

- pre-cooked cold chicken, cold delicatessen meats, paté or meat spreads
- raw seafood, smoked seafood (unless cooked and served hot), chilled seafood
- unpasteurised milk or milk products
- soft cheeses such as brie, camembert, ricotta, or blue-vein cheese
- soft serve ice cream
- sprouted seeds.

Fruit and vegetables eaten raw should be thoroughly washed prior to eating.

Follow the links for further [listeriosis data](#), the [listeriosis factsheet](#) and the [NSW Food Authority Food safety during pregnancy brochure](#).

Novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19)

For up-to-date information regarding the COVID-19 outbreak and the NSW response, please visit the [NSW Health COVID-19 page](#).

Summary of notifiable conditions activity in NSW

The following table summarises notifiable conditions activity over the reporting period (Table 1).

Table 1. NSW Notifiable conditions from 7 November to 13 November 2021, by date received*

		Weekly		Year to date			Full Year	
		This week	Last week	2021	2020	2019	2020	2019
Enteric Diseases	Cryptosporidiosis	11	5	384	480	533	549	669
	Giardiasis	21	24	1375	1635	2959	1869	3323
	Listeriosis	2	0	21	14	14	20	16
	Rotavirus	8	7	263	433	1124	464	1754
	STEC/VTEC	3	4	105	76	61	114	80
	Salmonellosis	96	53	2634	2508	3112	2885	3556
	Shigellosis	3	0	53	463	749	494	867
Respiratory Diseases	Influenza	5	1	86	7458	114427	7485	116432
	Tuberculosis	14	3	492	512	512	625	590
Sexually Transmissible Infections	Chlamydia	415	440	22601	23466	28047	27263	32482
	Gonorrhoea	128	133	6804	8658	10240	9890	11692
Vaccine Preventable Diseases	Meningococcal Disease	1	0	19	19	53	22	59
	Pneumococcal Disease (Invasive)	2	3	362	300	602	359	690
Vector Borne Diseases	Barmah Forest	4	3	97	251	60	271	63
	Ross River	2	4	623	1931	559	1990	593
Zoonotic Diseases	Psittacosis	1	0	11	23	9	30	11
	Q fever	2	1	139	184	219	206	248

* Notes on Table 1: NSW Notifiable Conditions activity

- Only conditions which had one or more case reports received during the reporting week appear in the table.
- Due to the rapidly evolving nature of the situation, data on COVID-19 notifications can be found separately on the NSW Health [Latest Updates on COVID-19](#) page.
- Data cells represent the number of case reports received by NSW public health units and recorded on the NSW Notifiable Conditions Information Management System (NCIMS) in the relevant period (i.e. by report date).
- Note that [notifiable disease data](#) available on the NSW Health website are reported by onset date so case totals are likely to vary from those shown here.
- Cases involving interstate residents are not included.
- The shigellosis case definition changed on 1 July 2018 to include probable cases (PCR positive only), hence case counts cannot be validly compared to previous years.

- Chronic blood-borne virus conditions (such as HIV, hepatitis B and C) are not included here. Related data are available from the [Infectious Diseases Data](#), the [HIV Surveillance Data Reports](#) and the [Hepatitis B and C Strategies Data Reports](#) webpages.
- Notification is dependent on a diagnosis being made by a doctor, hospital or laboratory. Changes in awareness and testing patterns influence the proportion of patients with a particular infection that is diagnosed and notified over time, especially if the infection causes non-specific symptoms.