

Saturday April 7, 2018

Recall of Creative Gourmet Frozen Pomegranate Linked To Hepatitis A Outbreak

NSW Health and the NSW Food Authority are working with Entyce Food Ingredients Pty Ltd which is conducting a precautionary recall of its Creative Gourmet branded frozen pomegranate product sold at Coles supermarkets.

Yesterday (Friday April 6) NSW Health identified that seven locally acquired cases of hepatitis A had all consumed the imported frozen pomegranates purchased from Coles.

Genetic testing available to date on some of the cases has identified a unique strain of hepatitis A.

NSW Health is also working with other States and Territories to determine if they also have locally acquired cases of hepatitis A with this strain - genotype 1B.

NSW Food Authority CEO Lisa Szabo said the Authority is working with the company, NSW Health and other State and Commonwealth agencies on the investigation.

“This outbreak appears to be linked to imported frozen product. Fresh pomegranate has not been implicated, nor have Australian grown frozen pomegranate products,” Dr Szabo said.

“Consumers with this product in their freezers should not consume it and should return the product to the place of purchase for a refund.

“Full details of the recall are available on the Food Standards Australia New Zealand website.”

Director of Communicable Diseases at NSW Health, Dr Vicky Sheppeard said NSW Health is working with the NSW Food Authority to confirm if the infection can be definitively linked to frozen pomegranate product sold at Coles supermarkets.

“Symptoms of hepatitis A take from 15 to 50 days to develop. It is caused by a virus that spreads in contaminated food or through poor hygiene,” Dr Sheppeard said.

“Symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, fever and yellowing of the skin, dark urine and pale stools.

“In most people the symptoms resolve after a few weeks with supportive treatment, mainly rest and fluids.

“People who have eaten the frozen pomegranate should consult their local doctor as early as possible should symptoms appear.

“Those who have consumed the product in the past two weeks may benefit from hepatitis A vaccination, if not already protected. If you are unsure if you have been vaccinated in the past it is safe to be revaccinated. Please check with your doctor.”

Those affected by the current outbreak are based in Sydney, the Central Coast and Wollongong.

So far this year there have been nine locally acquired cases of hepatitis A in NSW.

For more information on hepatitis A go to:

http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/Hepatitis_A.aspx