

Communicable Diseases Weekly Report

Week 38, 13 September to 19 September 2020

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 ([Table 1](#)). Both cases were in their 80s and had pre-existing medical conditions. Both cases remain in hospital. Food history was available for one case, who reported consuming numerous foods which are a risk for listeriosis within the exposure period.

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 child, newborns, older people and people with weakened immune systems, for example: people on cancer treatment or steroids, or people with diabetes, kidney disease, liver disease or living with HIV infection. Listeriosis may be severe in these individuals, and infections during pregnancy may cause stillbirth 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 13 September – 19 September 2020, by date received*

		Weekly		Year to date			Full Year	
		This week	Last week	2020	2019	2018	2019	2018
Enteric Diseases	Cryptosporidiosis	6	3	450	478	571	669	708
	Giardiasis	16	21	1363	2605	2210	3271	2936
	Listeriosis	2	0	12	11	17	16	19
	Rotavirus	6	1	402	789	606	1755	807
	Salmonellosis	24	28	2284	2701	2494	3559	3335
	Shigellosis	6	9	433	626	298	867	529
Respiratory Diseases	Influenza	16	7	7430	109462	13152	116453	17408
	Legionellosis	2	1	111	116	111	153	171
	Tuberculosis	15	8	424	415	373	593	508
Sexually Transmissible Infections	Chlamydia	451	496	19703	23505	23199	32444	31175
	Gonorrhoea	205	201	7336	8700	7856	11703	10601
Vaccine Preventable Diseases	Pertussis	4	3	1386	4603	3340	6387	6280
	Pneumococcal Disease (Invasive)	4	8	264	482	497	692	681
Vector Borne Diseases	Barmah Forest	2	6	222	51	61	62	74
	Ross River	7	11	1826	512	462	577	571
Zoonotic Diseases	Q fever	2	1	150	188	157	248	228

* 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.
- Data cells in the 'Adverse Event Following Immunisation' category refer to suspected cases only. These reports are referred to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for assessment. Data on adverse events following immunisation is available online from the TGA [Database of Adverse Event Notifications](#).
- 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.