Hepatitis A Outbreak Associated with Pomegranate Seeds

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Hepatitis A Outbreak and Townsend Frozen Berry Blend

- As of July 8, 2013, 143 confirmed cases
- 8 states affected: Arizona (21), California (69), Colorado (28), Hawaii (8), New Mexico (6), Nevada (6), Utah (3), and Wisconsin (2)
- 9 cases in Orange County
- All ill people who reported eating this product purchased it from Costco markets
- Product was also sold at Harris Teeter stores
  - No cases associated with these stores thus far

Epidemiology of Those Ill

- 79 (55%) are women
- Ages range 1 – 84 years;
- 82 (57%) between 40 – 64 years of age.
- 8 children age 18 ill
  - None were previously vaccinated.
- Illness onset dates range from 3/31/2013 – 6/24/2013
- 62 (43%) hospitalized
- No deaths

Outbreak strain of Hepatitis A is Genotype 1B

- Found in 56 cases
- This genotype rarely seen in the Americas
- Circulates in North Africa and the Middle East
- Genotype 1B previously identified in:
  - 2013 outbreak of hepatitis A virus infections in Europe linked to frozen berries
  - 2012 outbreak in British Columbia related to a frozen berry blend with pomegranate seeds from Egypt
  - No evidence at this time that these outbreaks are related to the ongoing U. S. outbreak.

FDA and CDC Investigation

- Vehicle for hepatitis A appears to be a common shipment of pomegranate seeds from Goknur Foodstuffs Import Export Trading in Turkey
- FDA will detain shipments of pomegranate seeds from Goknur
- These pomegranate seeds are used in:
  - Townsend Farms brand Organic Antioxidant Blend sold by Costco stores
  - Organic Antioxidant Berry Blend sold by Harris Teeter
  - Woodstock Frozen Organic Pomegranate Kernels from Scenic Food Company
  - All products recalled

California Department of Public Health Post Exposure Prophylaxis Recommendations

- Prophylaxis recommended for exposure within last two weeks
- Considered for all persons who consumed product
- Single-antigen Hepatitis A Vaccine is recommended

Age/years	<1*	1-40	41-59	60-74*
Healthy	IG	Vaccine preferred	Vaccine and/or IG	IG; vaccine if IG is in short supply
Other†	IG	IG	IG	IG
	Consider vaccine + IG for possible longer-term protection			

People who should receive IG for PEP

The following are at increased risk of severe HAV infection or may have a decreased immune response to vaccine:

- Persons with chronic liver disease (e.g., cirrhosis)
- Immunocompromised persons, including persons:
  - With HIV/AIDS;
  - Undergoing hemodialysis;
  - Have received solid organ, bone marrow or stem cell transplants;
  - Receive high dose steroids (>2mg/kg/day), chemotherapy, or immunomodulators and/or biologic medications
- Vaccine may be given in addition to IG to potentially provide longer-term protection, but vaccine response may be limited.

HCA Response

- Provide education and advice
- Vaccinate or give immune globulin to persons who have consumed the product within the last two weeks
- Environmental Health assured product is pulled from local stores
- Work with Costco to assure that accurate message is disseminated
- Follow up on cases, including prophylaxis for their close contacts