

Pizza Ranch linked to E. coli outbreak that sickened five in Minnesota

Of 13 people sickened, five were Minnesotans.

By [Mike Hughlett](#) Star Tribune

MARCH 16, 2016 — 7:28PM

[Text size](#)

An E. coli outbreak linked to Pizza Ranch restaurants sickened 13 people, including five Minnesotans.

The outbreak, which caused eight hospitalizations nationally but no deaths, occurred between Dec. 6 and Feb. 9, Brittany Behm, a spokeswoman for the Centers for Disease Control, said on Wednesday. The CDC considers the outbreak to be complete.

Northwestern Iowa-based Pizza Ranch has more than 190 outlets — including 40 in Minnesota — and is known for its namesake product along with chicken and a large salad bar.

Of the five Pizza Ranch customers who contracted E. coli O157:H7 in Minnesota, three were hospitalized, said Doug Schultz, a spokesman for the Minnesota Health Department. All three recovered.

E. coli O157:H7 is a potentially deadly bacterium that can cause dehydration, bloody diarrhea and abdominal cramps. While most people recover in a week, some can develop hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS), which can cause serious kidney damage or even death.

In the Pizza Ranch outbreak, two children — neither of whom were in Minnesota — contracted HUS, though they have recovered, Behm said.

Outside of Minnesota, there was one E. coli O157 case each in Iowa, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, North Carolina and New Jersey.

Nine of 12 victims interviewed by health authorities said they had eaten items made from "skillet dough mix" at Pizza Ranch, Behm said. The chain discontinued use of the dough mix after the reports of illness.

The company said in a press statement that it also ceased using the supplier of the dough mix.

Pizza Ranch said that in the outbreak's wake, laboratory tests of its products turned up negative for E. coli O157.

SOURCE: <http://www.startribune.com/pizza-ranch-source-of-e-coli-outbreak-that-sickened-5-in-minnesota/372276741/>