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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Salmonella Paratyphi Outbreak

[Ventura County, CA] On April 9, 2015, the State of California Department of Public Health (CDPH) notified Ventura County Communicable Disease of a possible Salmonella paratyphi outbreak. As of today, April 20, 2015, there have been 25 confirmed cases. Eighteen of these cases reside in California. (7 reside in LA County, 4 in Orange County, 2 in Riverside County, 1 in Santa Barbara County, and 4 in Ventura County) There are 7 out-of-state cases, most of whom had travel to Southern California. Twenty percent of affected patients have been hospitalized.

At this time, investigation is still ongoing regarding the cause of the outbreak. As of April 17, 10/10 people who completed detailed food questionnaires stated they had consumed sushi, and over 80% reported having eaten raw tuna. The Ventura County Environmental Health Division will provide information to CDPH about the source of food products from any Ventura County facilities associated with this outbreak.

This strain of Salmonella (Paratyphi B var. L(+) tartrate + (Java), pattern JKXX01.1495) had never been seen in animals or humans before March 2015. CDPH has noted that a closely-related strain was responsible for a salmonella outbreak in California and Hawaii in 2010. The 2010 outbreak was found to be linked to raw tuna imported from Indonesia. (For more information, see: <https://idsa.confex.com/idsa/2010/webprogram/Paper3398.html>) This strain is genetically different from the 2010 strain, so it appears the 2 strains are unrelated at this time.

Members of the public who become ill after eating sushi or any other foods can report concerns to Ventura County Environmental Health at <http://www.ventura.org/rma/envhealth/complaint-form.html>. The phone number for Environmental Health is 805-654-2813. If you have nausea, diarrhea (with or without blood), abdominal cramping and fever, especially if you have recently eaten raw fish, please seek medical attention and diagnostic testing.

Healthcare providers are advised to get stool cultures from patients presenting with diarrhea and fever. If these cultures are found to be positive for Salmonella spp., they should be subsequently typed by the Public Health Lab and the State of California. Providers should send a Confidential Morbidity Report (CMR) to Communicable Disease and advise patients who work in jobs where the risk is high of transmitting salmonella (food service, childcare or healthcare) to stay home from work pending instruction from the Ventura County Communicable Disease office. (<http://www.vchca.org/public-health/communicable-disease-office>)



Ventura County Public Health

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Recent food facility inspections can be viewed and complaints can also be placed via the “VCSafeDiner” app for iPhone and Android. The app and food inspection information are also available through the Ventura County Environmental Health Division site.

Salmonella is most commonly acquired from undercooked poultry, eggs and meat. Unpasteurized milk, juices and cheeses, nuts, nut butters and sprouts have also been sources of outbreaks. Salmonella can also be transmitted by pets with diarrhea or by pet birds and reptiles. Thorough hand washing with soap and water before eating and food preparation can prevent salmonella from being transmitted to food. Salmonella species can be killed by thoroughly cooking foods to a temperature of 165°F.

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