

FDA Advises Restaurants, Retailers and Consumers to Avoid Raw Oysters from Baynes Sound, British Columbia, Canada Because They Are Potentially Contaminated with Norovirus

Audience

- Restaurants and food retailers that have received and consumers who have purchased shipments of oysters harvested between January 16, 2023, and February 17, 2023, from Deep Bay, Baynes Sound subarea 14-8 landfiles #0278744, #0278742, #0278741, #0278740, #1414396, #0319716, #1414456, #1414457, #1400483, #1411206, #1407063, #1408485, #0278739, #0278737, #1403139, #0278734, #1411153 and #1411195 and subarea 13-16 landfile #1401845 in British Columbia, Canada.


Product

- Oysters harvested between January 16, 2023, and February 17, 2023, from Deep Bay, Baynes Sound subarea 14-8 landfiles #0278744, #0278742, #0278741, #0278740, #1414396, #0319716, #1414456, #1414457, #1400483, #1411206, #1407063, #1408485, #0278739, #0278737, #1403139, #0278734, #1411153 and #1411195 and subarea 13-16 landfile #1401845 in British Columbia, Canada.
- Packaged oysters include the harvest area information on their packaging.

Purpose

The FDA is advising consumers not to eat, and restaurants and food retailers not to sell, and to dispose of oysters that were harvested between January 16, 2023, and February 17, 2023, from Deep Bay, Baynes Sound subarea 14-8 or subarea 13-16 (landfile #140185) in British Columbia, Canada. Consumers who purchased oysters after January 16, 2023, should check the packaging to see if they were harvested in Baynes Sound subarea 14-8 or subarea 13-16 (landfile #140185). Contaminated shellfish can cause illness if eaten raw, particularly in people with compromised immune systems. Food contaminated with norovirus may look, smell, and taste normal. Consumers of these products who are experiencing symptoms of norovirus illness should contact their healthcare provider, who should report their symptoms to their local Health Department.

Summary of Problem and Scope

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is working with federal, state, and local officials, and with Canadian public health authorities on a [norovirus outbreak \(https://notices.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm?pg=view_notice&DOC_ID=275445&ID=all\)](https://notices.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm?pg=view_notice&DOC_ID=275445&ID=all).  (<http://www.fda.gov/about-fda/website-policies/website-disclaimer>) linked to raw oysters from British Columbia, Canada. Currently, illnesses have only been reported in Canada with no known cases of norovirus associated with these oysters reported in the U.S. The FDA is alerting restaurants, retailers and consumers because it is possible that states received these oysters through distribution to the U.S.

Retailers should not sell or serve raw oysters harvested from BC 14-8 or BC 13-16 (landfile #140185), with harvest dates starting as early as January 16, 2023, which will be printed on product tags.

Shellfish can cause illness if eaten raw, particularly in people with compromised immune systems. Food contaminated with norovirus may look, smell, and taste normal.

FDA Actions

The FDA is issuing this alert advising consumers to not eat, and restaurants and food retailers to not sell, oysters harvested between January 16, 2023, and February 17, 2023, from BC 14-8 or BC 13-16 (landfile #140185), British Columbia, Canada due to possible norovirus contamination. The FDA is awaiting information on distribution of the oysters and will continue to monitor the investigation and provide assistance to state authorities as needed.

Symptoms of Norovirus

People of all ages can get infected and sick with norovirus. The most common symptoms of norovirus are diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, and stomach pain. Other symptoms include fever, headache, and body ache.

A person usually develops symptoms 12 to 48 hours after being exposed to norovirus. Most people with norovirus illness get better within 1 to 3 days.

If you have norovirus illness, you can feel extremely ill, and vomit or have diarrhea many times a day. This can lead to dehydration, especially in young children, older adults, and people with other illnesses. Symptoms of dehydration include decrease in urination, dry mouth and throat, and feeling dizzy when standing up. Children who are dehydrated may cry with few or no tears and be unusually sleepy or fussy.

If you think you or someone you are caring for is severely dehydrated, call your healthcare provider.

Recommendations for Restaurants and Retailers

Restaurants and retailers should not sell/serve the potentially contaminated oysters.

Restaurants and retailers should dispose of any products by throwing them in the garbage or returning to their distributor for destruction.

Restaurants and retailers should also be aware that shellfish may be a source of pathogens and should control the potential for cross-contamination of food processing equipment and the food processing environment. They should follow the steps below:

- Wash hands with warm water and soap following the cleaning and sanitation process.
- Retailers, restaurants, and other food service operators who have processed and packaged any potentially contaminated products need to be concerned about cross-contamination of cutting surfaces and utensils through contact with the potentially contaminated products.
- Retailers that have sold bulk product should clean and sanitize the containers used to hold the product.
- Regular frequent cleaning and sanitizing of food contact surfaces and utensils used in food preparation may help to minimize the likelihood of cross-contamination.

Additional Information

- Norovirus | CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/index.html>).
- The Symptoms of Norovirus | CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/about/symptoms.html>).
- Preventing Norovirus | CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/about/prevention.html>).
- Raw Oyster Myths (</food/health-educators/raw-oyster-myths>).
- Handwashing: A Healthy Habit in the Kitchen | Handwashing | CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/handwashing-kitchen.html>).

Who to Contact


Consumers who have symptoms should contact their health care provider to report their symptoms and receive care.

To report a **complaint** or **adverse event** (illness or serious allergic reaction), you can

- Call an FDA Consumer Complaint Coordinator (</safety/report-problem-fda/consumer-complaint-coordinators>) if you wish to speak directly to a person about your problem.

- Complete an electronic Voluntary MedWatch form (<https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/medwatch/medwatch-online.htm>) online.
- Complete a paper Voluntary MedWatch form (</media/85598/download>) that can be mailed to FDA.

Submit Questions/Get Assistance (<https://www.fda.gov/fcic>)

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