



## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 2, 2016

**CONTACT:**

Melaney Arnold – 217-558-0500

[melaney.arnold@illinois.gov](mailto:melaney.arnold@illinois.gov)

### **Consumer Advice For Recalled Flour Linked To Multistate *E. coli* Outbreak**

**SPRINGFIELD** – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), other states, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to investigate a multistate outbreak of [Shiga toxin-producing](#) *Escherichia coli* O121 (STEC O121) infections. Thirty-eight people in 20 states, including four in Illinois, have been infected with the *E. coli* strain. The four individuals live in Chicago, suburban-Cook, Brown, and McHenry counties. There have been no deaths.

The bacteria is a strain of *E. coli* that can cause serious illness. Collaborative investigative efforts indicate that flour produced at the General Mills facility in Kansas City, Missouri, and sold nationwide is a likely source of this outbreak. On May 31, 2016, General Mills [recalled](#) several different sizes and varieties of Gold Medal Flour, Gold Medal Wondra Flour, and Signature Kitchens Flour due to possible *E. coli* contamination.

#### **What should people do?**

- First, it's important to check your pantry for the recalled flours. If you move your flour from the original packaging into a different container and don't remember what brand it was, throw out the flour and wash the container before reusing.
- Second, don't eat or play with raw dough or batters or allow children to do so. Even tasting a small amount could make you sick. Flour and raw eggs in uncooked doughs and batters can be contaminated with germs. Even doughs and batters made without eggs can be contaminated. Bake and cook all doughs and batters according to recipes or packaging before eating.

Products like cookie dough or cake batter ice cream are made from ingredients which have been treated to make them safe to eat without further cooking.

Most people infected with *E. coli* get bloody diarrhea and severe abdominal cramps 3-4 days after being exposed and recover within a week. For some groups, like young children, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems, *E. coli* infection can cause a type of kidney failure, called hemolytic uremic syndrome.

###

Find us on Facebook at [Facebook.com/IDPH.Illinois](https://www.facebook.com/IDPH.Illinois) or follow us on Twitter @IDPH

Nationally Accredited by PHAB

