



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Ongoing investigation of products from New England Compounding Center continues

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration continue to investigate a multi-state fungal meningitis outbreak and New England Compounding Center (NECC) products.

NECC has voluntarily recalled all of its products pending results from the investigation. Although no Alabama health care facilities received the initially recalled contaminated product, 10 health care facilities did receive other NECC sterile injectable products. The Alabama Department of Public Health has contacted all facilities and they have been instructed to stop using them. All clinics, hospitals and health care providers that have the recalled product should stop using it immediately, retain and secure it, and contact NECC.

Dr. Mary McIntyre, acting state epidemiologist for ADPH, stated, "As the 23 states contact all patients (up to 14,000) who received one of the three contaminated lots of methylprednisolone acetate (a steroid), Alabama residents who received treatment in other states may be involved and contacted by their health care provider or public health. As the ongoing investigation expands to more products, this increases the possibility that Alabama residents received NECC products."

At this time there is no evidence to indicate that products other than the three initial NECC lots are contaminated. There is also no evidence at this time that any of the NECC products received by Alabama's facilities are contaminated. Other manufacturers' products are not involved in this investigation, and medically necessary care should not be delayed out of fear that patients will receive an NECC product. All NECC products have been recalled.

A Health Alert Network message will be sent to all physicians to let them know about the products recalled and what to do with patients who present with symptoms. This type of meningitis is not contagious, and it cannot be spread from person to person. The symptoms include fever, headache (new symptoms or worsening), onset of stiff neck or sensitivity to light, or symptoms suggestive of a stroke such as slurred speech, difficulty walking, or increased dizziness or falls.

Alabama residents who have had an epidural steroid injection since May 21, 2012, and have any of the following symptoms, should talk to their doctor as soon as possible:

- New or worsening headache

- Fever
- Sensitivity to light
- Stiff neck
- New weakness or numbness in any part of your body
- Slurred speech
- Increased pain, redness or swelling at your injection site

Additional information, including a list of states involved, is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/hai/outbreaks/meningitis.html>.

For more information, please contact Nadine Crawford, M.S.N., Chris Caldwell, R.N., or Tina Pippin, B.S.N., at 1-800-338-8374.

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