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## News

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### Public health investigation of *Salmonella* Enteritidis in raw shell eggs

The public health investigation (PHI) of raw shell eggs from premises linked to outbreaks of *S. Enteritidis*, or their sources of supply reported previously (1,2) is continuing.

Since October 2002, Public Health Laboratories have tested 29 batches comprising 651 pooled samples of six whole eggs (3906 eggs in total) in the PHI. These were eggs associated with outbreaks of salmonellosis in humans. *Salmonella* has been recovered from 35 (5.3%) of the 651 pools (table 1). *Salmonella* was isolated from 23 out of 449 (5.1%) pooled samples labelled as originating from Spain; from one out of 74 (1.3%) pooled samples labelled as United Kingdom (UK) origin but not Lion Quality; and from 11 out of 40 (27.5%) pooled samples of eggs reported as imported but with no country of origin. No salmonellas were recovered from UK eggs bearing the Lion Quality mark (eight pooled samples) or from eggs imported from the United States (US) (60 pooled samples).

Great care needs to be exercised in interpreting these results. The primary objective of this PHI is to determine the level of contamination in eggs used in premises linked to outbreaks and the types of salmonella they contain. The eggs examined here are unlikely to be those in use when the original outbreaks occurred. No country's eggs were targeted in the investigation: the results reported here reflect those on eggs in use in the food production premises or suppliers at the time of sampling. Eggs from different countries have not been examined on a representative basis. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) plans to conduct surveys of eggs in the near future (3) and has advised importers and wholesalers that eggs imported from Spain should be sent for heat treatment (4). The FSA has also issued advice on the cooking and use of raw shell eggs, particularly when catering for vulnerable groups (5).

The latest batch of eggs was tested on 17 December 2002. The PHI is continuing and the results will be published in the *CDR Weekly* on a regular basis.

**Table 1 *Salmonella* Enteritidis in eggs: contamination rates based on pooled samples of six eggs (Data received up to 6 January 2003)**

Date tested	Labelled origin of eggs	No. Pools Tested	No. Pools positive	% Pools positive	Salmonella sero/phage type	PHLS Laboratory
01.10.02	UK Lion Quality	1	–	–	ND	Reading

05.10.02	Spain	5	–	–	ND	London
11.10.02	Spain	20	–	–	ND	London
11.10.02	Spain	20	–	–	ND	London
11.10.02	Spain	20	2	10%	S. Enteritidis PT6a (NxCpL)	London
17.10.02 & 26.10.02	Spain	147	11	7.50%	S. Enteritidis PT5c, 6, 6a (NxCpL), 13a, 14b, 58	London
18.10.02	Spain	58	–	–	ND	London
28.10.02	UK. Not Lion Quality	2	–	–	ND	Reading
13.11.02	Spain	20	6	30%	S. Enteritidis PT6d (AmpR)	Southampton
25.11.02	UK Lion Quality	2	–	–	ND	Chelmsford
25.11.02	Not known. Not Lion Quality	20	7	35%	S. Enteritidis PT6a (AmpR) S. Ohio S. Infantis S. Altona	Chelmsford
26.11.02	Not known. Not Lion Quality	20	4	20%	S. Enteritidis PT6a (AmpR) S. Ohio S. Infantis	Chelmsford
27.11.02	Not known. Not Lion Quality	20	–	–	ND	Chelmsford
27.11.02	UK. Not Lion Quality	20	–	–	ND	Southampton
02.12.02	UK. Not Lion Quality	10	–	–	ND	Reading
03.12.02	Spain	20	–	–	ND	Leicester
04.12.02	UK but not Lion Quality	5	–	–	ND	Southampton
05.12.02	Spain	20	–	–	ND	Southampton
09.12.02	Spain	20	–	–	ND	Southampton
09.12.02	Spain	20	–	–	ND	Leicester
09.12.02	Spain	20	1	5%	S. Enteritidis PT14b (NxCpL)	Leicester
10.12.02	UK. Not Lion Quality	20	–	–	ND	Plymouth
11.12.02	UK Lion Quality	5	–	–	ND	Plymouth
11.12.02	UK. Not Lion Quality	15	–	–	ND	Plymouth
16.12.02	Spain	19	1	5.20%	S. Enteritidis PT1 (NxCp)	Leicester
16.12.02	Spain	20	1	5%	S. Enteritidis PT1c (AmpR)	Leicester
17.12.02	Spain	20	1	5%	S. Enteritidis PT12 (NxCpL)	Southampton
17.12.02	UK. Not Lion Quality	2	1	50%	S. Enteritidis PT6	Southampton
17.12.02	USA	60	–	–	ND	Chelmsford
<b>Total eggs tested: 3,906</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>3.50%</b>	–	ND	

\*ND = Not Detected

- 2002 [cited 19 December 2002]; **12** (50): news. Available at <<http://www.phls.org.uk/publications/cdr/pages/news.html#eggs>>.
2. London public health investigation of *Salmonella* Enteritidis in raw shell eggs *Commun Dis Rep CDR Wkly* [serial online] 2002 [cited 9 January 2003]; **12** (51): news. Available at <<http://www.phls.org.uk/publications/cdr/archive02/News/news5102.htm>>
3. ACMSF. *Current outbreaks of Salmonella* Enteritidis in England. Information Paper ACM/611. London: ACMSF, 2002. Available at <<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/acm611.pdf>>
4. Food Standards Agency. *Agency re-emphasises advice on use and handling of all eggs, and issues guidance on use of Spanish eggs*. Press release R507-28. London: FSA, 29 October 2002. Available at: <<http://www.food.gov.uk/news/pressreleases/reemphasiseeggadvice>>
5. Food standards Agency. *Eggs*. [online] [cited 9 January 2003]. London: FSA, 3 December 2002. Available at <<http://www.food.gov.uk/safereating/foodadvice/eggs2002advice>>
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## New legionella guidelines – Ireland

The National Disease Surveillance Centre (NDSC) in the Republic of Ireland has published new guidelines on the management of legionnaires' disease (1). The guidelines were produced by members of a scientific advisory committee and a legionnaires' disease sub-committee. They include information and advice on cases and environmental aspects of legionella infection associated with the hospital, community, travel, or domestic setting. They also discuss the theoretical risk of legionella infection associated with dental unit water lines – although no such cases have ever been reported in the United Kingdom or the rest of Europe. Legionnaires' disease is statutorily notifiable in Ireland under the *1981 Infectious Disease Regulations*, but current legionella-specific legislation is mainly centred on protection through health and safety at work regulations. Regulations for protecting the public at large are less evident and include the absence of any regulations for the registration of cooling towers or other high risk water cooling devices. The guidelines include a list of recommendations that if implemented would improve the detection, diagnosis, treatment, and control and prevention of legionnaires' disease in Ireland.

1. Scientific Advisory Committee, Legionnaires' Disease sub-Committee. *The management of legionnaires' disease in Ireland*. Dublin: National Disease Surveillance Centre, 2002. Available online at <http://www.ndsc.ie/Publications/LegionnairesDisease/d422.PDF>

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## **Erratum: Staphylococcus aureus bacteraemia: England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, July to September 2002**

*Commun Dis Rep CDR Wkly* 2002; **12**(51): bacteraemia  
Published 19 December 2002

The published item stated "There were also problems with reporting from the Eastern region; it is likely that when the complete 2002 summary is published next year there may be some additional reports for this quarter." It should be made clear that the source of the problems is not thought to lie within the reporting laboratories in the region.

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### General outbreaks of foodborne illness, England and Wales: weeks 49-52/02\*

DHA	Organism	Location of food prepared or served	Month of outbreak	Number ill	Cases positive	Suspect vehicle	Evidence
Avon	S. Enteritidis PT6	Party	November	3	3	None	-
Wales	S. Enteritidis PT6D	Party	November	6	6	Egg sandwiches	D
Berkshire	S. Enteritidis PT14B	Restaurant	November	>1	>1	None	-

\* Preliminary data. Final information will be published in the quarterly report.

# not known

M (microbiological): identification of an organism of the same type from cases and in the suspect vehicle, or vehicle ingredient(s), or detection of toxin in faeces or food; S (statistical): a significant statistical association between consumption of the suspect vehicle(s) and being a case; D (descriptive): other evidence, usually descriptive, reported by local investigators as indicating the suspect vehicle

Salmonella infections: England and Wales, reports to the PHLS (salmonella data set\*)

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### Salmonella infections: England and Wales, reports to the PHLS (salmonella data set\*) November 2002

Details of serotypes of 1058 salmonella infections recorded in November 2002 are given in the adjacent table. In December 2002, 669 salmonella infections were recorded and preliminary information was received about 3 outbreaks (see above table)

	November 2002
<b>Salmonella (provisional data)</b>	1058
S. Enteritidis (PT4)	258
S. Enteritidis (other PTs)	479
S. Typhimurium	108
S. Virchow	16
Other (typed)	197

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## Common gastrointestinal infections, England and Wales: laboratory reports, weeks 49-52/02

Laboratory reports	Number of reports received				Total reports	Cumulative total to	
	49/02	50/02	51/02	52/02	49-52/02	52/02	52/01
<i>Campylobacter</i>	770	776	1056	132	2734	46,484	56,592
<i>Escherichia coli</i> O157*	8	14	2	3	27	573	803
Salmonella†	274	254	293	70	891	14,607	16,474
<i>Shigella sonnei</i>	11	11	11	1	34	692	897
Rotavirus	71	62	130	14	277	14,528	16,350
Norovirus	56	118	160	5	339	3640	1604
<i>Cryptosporidium</i>	65	71	125	9	270	2890	3680
<i>Giardia</i>	68	61	89	6	224	3166	3580

\* Vero cytotoxin producing isolates (data from LEP)

† Data from PHLS LEP

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## Less common gastrointestinal infections, England and Wales: laboratory reports, weeks 40 – 52/02

Laboratory reports	Total reports	Cumulative total to	
	40 – 52/02*	52/02*	52/01
Adenovirus	13	56	256
Astrovirus	12	96	116
Calicivirus	9	32	28
<i>Shigella boydii</i>	13	54	52
<i>Shigella dysenteriae</i>	3	23	31
<i>Shigella flexneri</i>	45	220	225
Aeromonas	57	220	204
Plesiomonas	9	23	25
Vibrio	6	48	47
Yersinia	16	51	26
<i>Entamoeba</i>	38	161	220

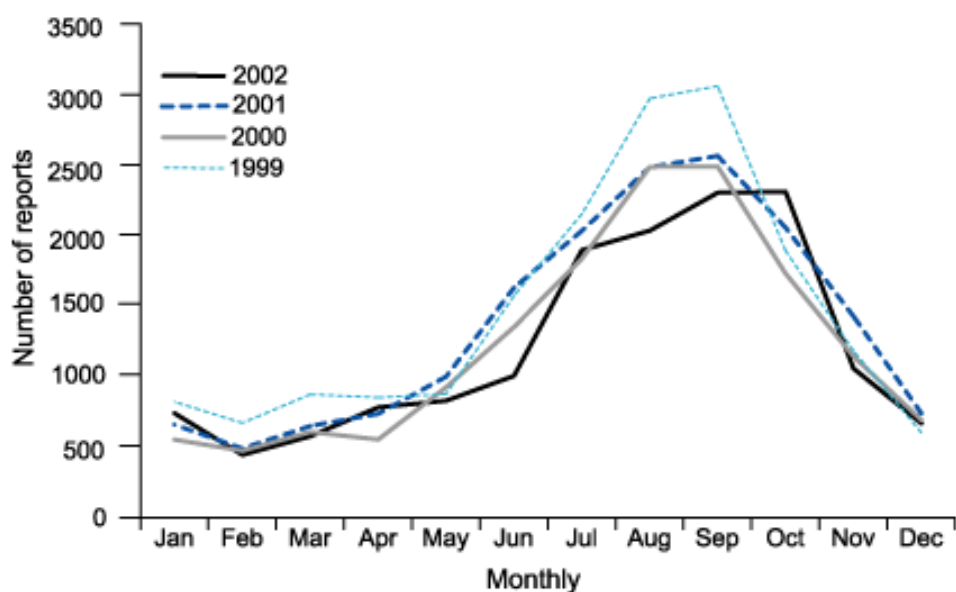
<i>Blastocystis hominis</i>	85	378	344
<i>Dientamoeba fragilis</i>	37	189	199
<i>Taenia</i> spp	18	63	104
<i>Trichostrongylus</i> spp	–	–	2
<i>Trichuris trichiura</i>	10	101	90

\* provisional data

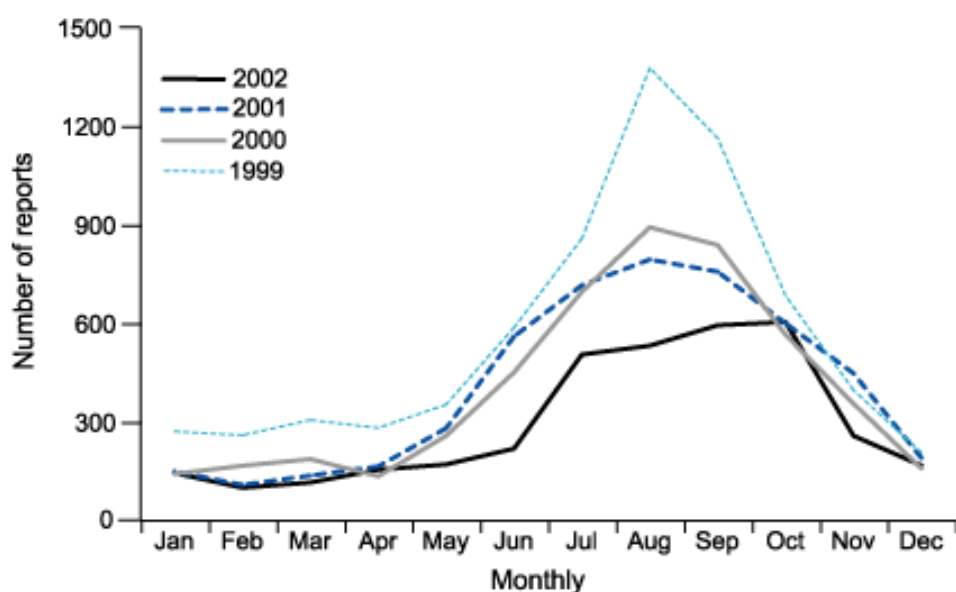
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## Salmonella infections in humans: monthly totals for 1999 to 2002

### a) All salmonellas



### b) *S. Enteritidis* phage type 4



Just over 14,600 salmonellas were reported in 2002, 11% lower than in 2001. The number of reports of *Salmonella* Enteritidis phage type (PT) 4 in 2002 decreased by 27%. Other phage types of *S. enteritidis* increased by 5% during 2002.