West Virginia Department of HEALTH

WEST VIRGINIA HEALTH ALERT NETWORK
HEALTH ADVISORY #238
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HEALTH ADVISORY | May not require immediate action.

Increase in *Salmonella* Typhimurium in West Virginia

TO	West Virginia healthcare providers, hospitals, and laboratories
FROM	Shannon McBee, MPH, CHES, State Epidemiologist, West Virginia Department of Health, Bureau for Public Health
DATE	October 28, 2026
PLEASE SHARE	**Local health departments:** Distribute to community health providers, hospital-based physicians, infection preventionists, laboratory directors, and other applicable partners. **Associations and other recipients:** Distribute to association members and staff.

KEY POINTS

- 41 cases of *Salmonella* Typhimurium reported in West Virginia since early September; five patients hospitalized. No common source has been identified.
- Culture every *Salmonella* positive CIDT, or send the CIDT-positive specimen to WV OLS.
- Submit all *Salmonella* isolates to WV OLS for whole genome sequencing.
- Report salmonellosis cases to the local health department within 72 hours.

SUMMARY

The West Virginia Department of Health (WVDH) is investigating an outbreak of *Salmonella* Typhimurium. Since early September, 41 cases have been reported. Patients range in age from 3 to 54 years, and five have been hospitalized. Exposures are under investigation, but no common source has been identified. To date, no cases outside of West Virginia have been linked to this outbreak, indicating a localized event. Timely reporting and specimen submission are essential to identifying the source. These cases highlight the importance of continued collaboration between healthcare providers, laboratories, and public health for *Salmonella* surveillance.

BACKGROUND

Salmonella Typhimurium is one of the most reported *Salmonella* serotypes in the United States. It is acquired primarily through consuming contaminated food or water, through contact with infected animals and their environments. Laboratory testing, including culture, is essential for the diagnosis of salmonellosis. Most patients recover without antibiotics, but infections can progress to bacteremia or septicemia in young children, older adults, and immunocompromised individuals.

Culture-independent diagnostic tests (CIDTs), such as polymerase chain reaction (PCR) gastrointestinal pathogen panels, detect *Salmonella* genetic material and allow rapid diagnosis. However, they do not produce a bacterial isolate. Without an isolate, laboratories cannot test antimicrobial susceptibility, and public health cannot determine the serotype or perform whole genome sequencing (WGS). WGS is how WVDH links cases and identifies outbreak sources. For this reason, culture should follow every *Salmonella*-positive CIDT, and isolates or CIDT-positive specimens should be sent to the West Virginia Office of Laboratory Services (WV OLS).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

1. Consider salmonellosis in the differential diagnosis for patients with acute diarrhea.
2. Order stool testing for suspected cases and collect specimens before starting antibiotics when possible.
3. If a CIDT is positive for *Salmonella*, order a stool culture or confirm that your laboratory will perform reflex culture.
4. When antibiotic treatment is necessary, use antimicrobial susceptibility results to guide therapy.
5. Report salmonellosis to the local health department (LHD) serving the patient's county of residence within 72 hours.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LABORATORIES

1. Report *Salmonella* positive results to the LHD serving the patient's county of residence within 72 hours.
2. Perform reflex culture on all *Salmonella*-positive CIDT specimens. If you cannot perform the culture, send the CIDT-positive specimen in Cary-Blair transport medium to WV OLS for culture and WGS.
3. Submit all *Salmonella* isolates to WV OLS for WGS.

SPECIMEN SUBMISSION

Ship to	West Virginia Office of Laboratory Services, 167 11th Avenue, South Charleston, WV 25303
Laboratory phone	(304) 558-3530
Include	A completed Microbiology Laboratory Specimen Submission Form
Forms and instructions	Submission form and Stool Specimen Collection Instructions (Enteric) at dhhr.wv.gov/ols/forms

QUESTIONS OR TO REPORT A PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERN
Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services, Epidemiologist On-Call: **(304) 558-5358**

CATEGORIES OF HEALTH ALERT NETWORK MESSAGES

HEALTH ALERT	Conveys the highest level of importance. Warrants immediate action or attention.
HEALTH ADVISORY	Provides important information for a specific incident or situation. May not require immediate action.
HEALTH UPDATE	Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation. Unlikely to require immediate action.

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