



City and County of San Francisco

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## San Francisco Department of Public Health

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **MULTI-STATE OUTBREAK OF HEPATITIS A ASSOCIATED WITH A FROZEN BERRY FOOD PRODUCT**

#### **San Francisco Health Officer Issues Medical Alert to Clinicians and Public**

**San Francisco, CA** –Acting in accord with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s investigation into an outbreak of Hepatitis A in persons who consumed Townsend Farms Organic Anti-oxidant Blend frozen berry mix, health officials at the San Francisco Department of Public Health have issued a health alert to local clinicians, advising them to be on the lookout for patients who present with symptoms of Hepatitis A. In addition, Tomas Aragon, MD, Health Officer for the City & County of San Francisco, is also recommending that anyone who has eaten these berries in the past two weeks should consult with their health care provider to receive preventive Hepatitis A vaccine and/or immunoglobulin and they should monitor themselves for symptoms of the disease.

“Currently, we have no cases of Hepatitis A in San Francisco linked to these berries, but, because it appears that the product has been widely distributed in San Francisco and the Bay Area by Costco and perhaps through other outlets, we need the medical community and consumers to be aware of the possibility of contracting this disease,” said Dr. Aragon. “Additionally, we are advising individuals and businesses who bought the Townsend Farms Organic frozen berry mix to not eat them and dispose of them immediately.”

This past weekend, a case of Hepatitis A in a patient in Contra Costa County was linked to the outbreak, bringing the number of cases in California to 7.

If you have been fully vaccinated against Hepatitis A, then you are immune and protected. If you are not immune, and you ate the Townsend Farms Organic Antioxidant Blend frozen berries, then the Hepatitis A vaccine or immunoglobulin can protect you as long as you get vaccinated within 14 days of eating the product.

Early signs of Hepatitis A appear 2-6 weeks after exposure. Symptoms commonly include mild fever, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, right upper abdominal pain, dark urine and jaundice.

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**The mission of the San Francisco Department of Public Health is to protect and promote the health of all San Franciscans.**

We shall ~ Assess and research the health of the community ~ Develop and enforce health policy ~ Prevent disease and injury ~  
~ Educate the public and train health care providers ~ Provide quality, comprehensive, culturally-proficient health services ~ Ensure equal access to all ~

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The risk of developing Hepatitis A from exposure to these frozen berries is low and those who contract the disease usually recover completely, but sometimes Hepatitis A can lead to hospitalization and severe illness. It is very important that if you have symptoms you do not go to work, especially if you work in food service, health care or child care.

San Francisco residents who believe they may have been exposed to the contaminated frozen berry product should contact their medical provider, or call 311 (from within the 415 area code) or (415) 701-2311 for more information.

The San Francisco Department of Public Health, Communicable Disease Prevention Section has created a set of Frequently-Asked- Questions (FAQ's) at <http://www.sfcddcp.org/>.

For more information, consumers should consult the following websites for the latest news and recommendations

**CDC outbreak notice:** [www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/Outbreaks/2013/A1b-03-31/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/Outbreaks/2013/A1b-03-31/index.html)

**CDC advice for consumers:** [www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/Outbreaks/2013/A1b-03-31/advice-consumers.html](http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/Outbreaks/2013/A1b-03-31/advice-consumers.html)

**California Department of Public Health:** [www. http://www.cdph.ca.gov/](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/)

**San Francisco Department of Public Health:** [www.sfdph.org/](http://www.sfdph.org/)

**SFDPH Communicable Disease Control and Prevention:** <http://www.sfcddcp.org/>

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