
Public Health Alert

Update on Fungal Meningitis Outbreak

October 17, 2012

SITUATION UPDATE

As of October 17, 2012, 247 cases from 15 states, with 19 deaths have been reported. Although no cases have been reported in California, patients may have received the product in another jurisdiction and present for care locally. It is important for clinicians to remain informed about new developments.

As a result of the ongoing investigation of New England Compounding Center (NECC), a patient with possible meningitis potentially associated with epidural injection of an additional NECC product, triamcinolone acetonide, has been identified through active surveillance and reported to FDA. Triamcinolone acetonide is a type of steroid injectable product made by NECC. The cases of meningitis identified to date have been associated with methylprednisolone acetate, another similar steroid injectable product.

At this point in FDA's investigation, the sterility of any injectable drugs, including ophthalmic drugs that are injectable or used in conjunction with eye surgery, and cardioplegic solutions produced by NECC are of significant concern and out of an abundance of caution, patients who received these products should be alerted to the potential risk of infection. At this time, no cases of infection have been reported in connection with any NECC-produced ophthalmic drug that is injectable or used in conjunction with eye surgery, but FDA believes this class of products could present potentially similar risks of infection. Products from NECC can be identified by markings that indicate New England Compounding Center by name or by its acronym (NECC), and/or the company logo that can be accessed here: <http://www.neccrx.com/necc-logo.gif>.

As a precaution, FDA advises that health care providers follow-up with patients who received an injectable product, including an ophthalmic drug that is injectable or used in conjunction with eye surgery, or a cardioplegic solution purchased from or produced by NECC after May 21, 2012.

Updated clinician guidance is located at <http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/outbreaks/meningitis.html>.

All meningitis cases are reportable to Department of Public Health Disease Control: By telephone (951) 358-5107 or fax (951) 358-5102.