



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

KAREN REMLEY, MD, MBA, FAAP
STATE HEALTH COMMISSIONER

Department of Health
P O BOX 2448
RICHMOND, VA 23218

TTY 7-1-1 OR
1-800-828-1120

October 17, 2012

Dear Clinician,

This notice is to make you aware that on October 15, 2012, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a MedWatch Alert pertaining to the multistate investigation of a fungal meningitis outbreak related to epidural spinal injections.

FDA is advising health care providers to follow up with patients who were administered any injectable medication, including injectable ophthalmic drugs used in surgery or cardioplegic solution, from or produced by New England Compounding Center (NECC) after May 21, 2012.

Clinicians should inform patients, who received one of these products, of the symptoms of possible infection and instruct them to contact a physician immediately if they experience any of the symptoms. FDA advises health care providers to report adverse events or side effects related to the use of these products to FDA's MedWatch Safety Information and Adverse Event Reporting Program. Please refer to the FDA website [here](#) and follow its guidance for reporting.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) along with state health departments are investigating possible adverse events that might be associated with additional NECC products. Two recent findings from these investigations – a patient with possible meningitis who had received an epidural injection of triamcinolone acetonide produced by NECC and the report of a transplant patient with *Aspergillus fumigatus* infection following the use of a NECC cardioplegic solution during open heart surgery, prompted the FDA to issue the MedWatch Alert out of an abundance of caution.

At this point in the FDA's investigation, the sterility of any injectable drugs produced by NECC is of significant concern. 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](#).

To date, Virginia has only documented meningitis cases associated with the three initially recalled lots of methylprednisolone acetate. No other illnesses associated with other products from NECC have been reported to VDH. Based on the currently available information, VDH is not expanding its investigation to include other products from NECC at this time.

VDH continues to work closely with the CDC on the fungal meningitis outbreak investigation in southwest Virginia and is conducting active surveillance on all patients who received an injection with methylprednisolone acetate from one of the three initially recalled lots produced by NECC. As a reminder, the VDH home page, www.vdh.virginia.gov has links to CDC's Meningitis Outbreak webpage, which will have the most CDC Health Alerts and current guidelines on diagnostic testing and treatment. Please check the guidelines since these recommendations frequently change as more is learned about this infection.

Sincerely,

David H. Trump, MD, MPH, MPA
State Epidemiologist & Director, Office of Epidemiology