

Listeriosis

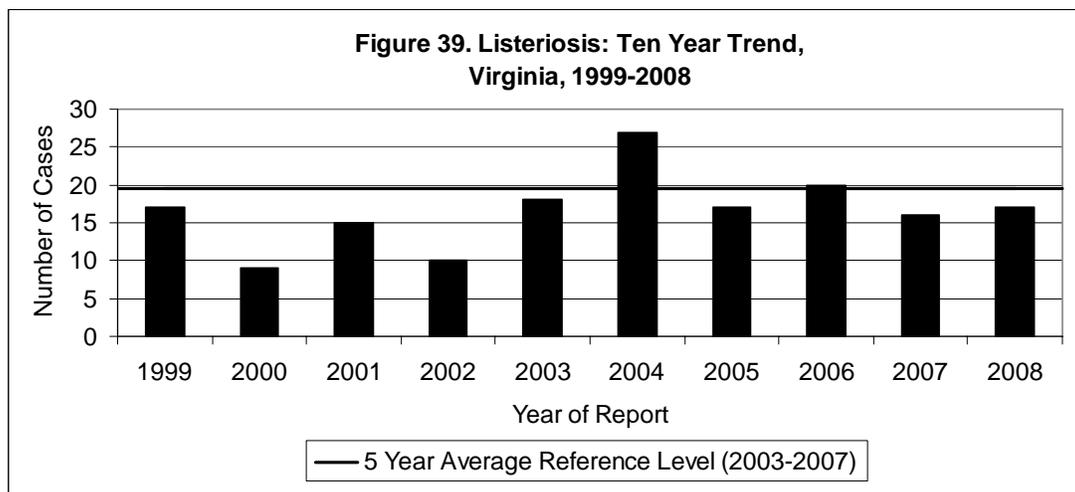
Agent: *Listeria monocytogenes* (bacteria)

Mode of Transmission: Ingestion of contaminated foods or beverages.

Signs/Symptoms: Typically, fever, headache, nausea, and vomiting. Infection can lead to serious disease, including shock and inflammation of the brain and the fluid surrounding the brain and spinal cord. Miscarriage may occur.

Prevention: Safe food preparation (e.g., thoroughly cooking raw food from animals and washing vegetables) and avoidance of high risk foods (e.g., unpasteurized dairy products).

Other Important Information: Persons at higher risk include pregnant women and persons with weakened immune systems.



The 17 cases of listeriosis reported in Virginia during 2008 represent a 13% decrease from the five year average of 19.6 cases per year (Figure 39). The 60 year and older age group had the highest number of cases (8 cases, 0.6 per 100,000), but the highest rate occurred among infants (4 cases, 3.9 per 100,000). The other age groups had consistently lower incidence, with rates between 0.0 and 0.2 per 100,000. Race information was missing from 35% of reported cases. Among cases with race reported, incidence rates were similar in the black and white populations (0.2 and 0.1 per 100,000, respectively). The rate was slightly higher for females than for males (0.3 and 0.1 per 100,000, respectively). Incidence rates in the regions ranged from 0.1 to 0.4 per 100,000, with the highest rate in the southwest region. Cases occurred throughout the year, with peak activity (41%) occurring in the third quarter. The two cases reported as having meningitis due to listeriosis were both in the 60 year and over age group. Six of the reported cases were pregnancy-related, including two pregnant females and four neonates less than one month old. Among cases reported in 2008, one death was attributed to listeriosis in an adult female.