



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**This is an official  
MSDH Medical Advisory**

**MESSAGE ID:** MSHAN-20190111-00144-ADV (Medical Advisory)  
**RECIPIENTS:** All Physicians, Labs, Hospitals, and Providers- Statewide  
**DATE:** Friday, January 11, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** Raw Milk Associated with *Brucella abortus* RB51

**Key points**

- *Brucella abortus* RB51 (a live attenuated veterinary vaccine strain) has been associated with raw milk products from a Pennsylvania dairy, Miller's Biodiversity Farm, leading to a least one illness. The timeframe of concern for exposure dates back to January 2016.
- Miller's Biodiversity Farm is communicating with consumers from several states, including Mississippi, who may have purchased raw milk or milk products since January 2016, asking them to seek medical evaluation, even if they have no symptoms.
- Asymptomatic persons with more recent exposure to these products since July 1, 2018 may require antibiotics to prevent infection.
- Notify the MSDH Office of Epidemiology at 601-576-7725 for any patients who report exposure to raw milk or raw milk products from Miller's Biodiversity Farm since January 2016.
- If acute Brucellosis is suspected in any patient, notify MSDH within 24 hours at 601-576-7725 (601-576-7400 after hours, weekends and holidays).

Dear Colleagues,

In October 2018 a New York Resident became ill with *Brucella* after drinking raw milk from Miller's Biodiversity Farm in Pennsylvania. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed the illness was due to *Brucella abortus* RB51, a live attenuated strain of *Brucella* used in veterinary vaccines.

Individuals who consumed raw milk or milk products from Miller's Biodiversity Farm in Pennsylvania since January 2016 may be at risk for *Brucella* infection. The Farm is communicating with consumers from several states, including Mississippi, who may have purchased raw milk or raw milk products since January 2016 to inform them of the potential risk and recommend medical evaluation, even if asymptomatic.



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Symptoms of acute brucellosis can include fever, myalgia, anorexia, fatigue and headache up to 1-6 months after exposure. Untreated *Brucella* RB51 infections can lead to long-term health problems such as recurrent fevers, heart problems, arthritis, neurologic symptoms and hepatosplenomegaly.

The *Brucella* RB51 strain is resistant to some of the typical antibiotics used to treat or prevent brucellosis. Also, normal serologic tests will not detect *Brucella* RB51 strain.

While it is unlikely that there are many Mississippi residents with potential exposure to raw milk or raw milk products from Miller's Biodiversity Farm, Mississippi healthcare providers are asked to:

- Notify the Mississippi State Department of Health Office of Epidemiology at 601-576-7725 for any patients who report exposure to raw milk or raw milk products from Miller's Biodiversity Farm since January 2016, regardless of symptoms.
- Asymptomatic persons with exposure since July 1, 2018 may require prophylactic antibiotics to prevent infection.
- If blood cultures are performed to evaluate symptomatic patients, please notify the laboratory about the possibility of brucellosis prior to sending the blood. Laboratory exposures and transmission have previously occurred.

Regards

Paul Byers, MD  
State Epidemiologist

Resources:

- CDC *Brucella* Homepage: <https://www.cdc.gov/brucellosis/index.html>
- CDC *Brucella abortus* RB51: <https://www.cdc.gov/brucellosis/clinicians/rb51-raw-milk.html>



***Alerting Message Specification Settings***

**Originating Agency:** Mississippi State Department of Health  
**Alerting Program:** MSDH Medical Advisory  
**Message Identifier:** MSHAN-20190111-00144-ADV  
**Program (HAN) Type:** Medical Advisory  
**Status (Type):** Actual ()  
**Message Type:** Alert  
**Reference:** MSHAN-00144  
**Severity:** Unknown  
**Acknowledgement:** No  
**Sensitive:** Not Sensitive  
**Message Expiration:** Undetermined  
**Urgency:** Undetermined  
**Delivery Time:** 600 minutes

**Definition of Alerting Vocabulary and Message Specification Settings**

**Originating Agency:** A unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.

**Alerting Program:** The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.

**Message Identifier:** A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation (MSHAN-yyymmdd-hhmm-TTT (**ALT=Health Alert**, **ADV=Health Advisory**, **UPD=Health Update**, **MSG/INFO=Message/Info Service**)).

**Program (HAN) Type:** Categories of Health Alert 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.

**Health Info Service:** Provides Message / Notification of general public health information; unlikely to require immediate action.

**Status (Type):**

Actual: Communication or alert refers to a live event  
Exercise: Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert  
Test: Communication or alert is related to a technical, system test and should be disregarded



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**Message Type:**

Alert: Indicates an original Alert  
Update: Indicates prior alert has been Updated and/or superseded  
Cancel: Indicates prior alert has been cancelled  
Error: Indicates prior alert has been retracted

**Reference:** For a communication or alert with a Message Type of “Update” or “Cancel”, this attribute contains the unique Message Identifier of the original communication or alert being updated or cancelled. “n/a” = Not Applicable.

**Severity:**

Extreme: Extraordinary threat to life or property  
Severe: Significant threat to life or property  
Moderate: Possible threat to life or property  
Minor: Minimal threat to life or property  
Unknown: Unknown threat to life or property

**Acknowledgement:** Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the timeframe in which a response is required (Yes or No).

**Sensitive:**

Sensitive: Indicates the alert contains sensitive content  
Not Sensitive: Indicates non-sensitive content

**Message Expiration:** Undetermined.

**Urgency:** Undetermined. Responsive action should be taken immediately.

**Delivery Time:** Indicates the timeframe for delivery of the alert (15, 60, 1440, 4320 minutes (.25, 1, 24, 72 hours)).