

NEWS RELEASE

City of Middletown

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT BANS PEANUT PRODUCTS IN SCHOOLS

Middletown — Growing concerns about the possibility of salmonella poisoning, has prompted the city health department to order all Middletown public schools to immediately stop serving peanut butter and foods containing peanuts. After conferring with school officials, Middletown Health Director Dr. Joseph A. Havlicek decided to issue the ban because more areas of the country are detecting salmonella in a wider array of peanut products.

Salmonella is a type of bacteria that usually attacks the stomach and intestines causing dehydration from prolonged diarrhea. Other symptoms may include constipation, stomach cramps, vomiting, fever, headache, chills, sweats, fatigue, and lack of appetite. In more serious cases, the bacteria can enter the lymph tracts which carry water and protein to the blood. Children and the elderly who are already ill are much more likely to get a serious infection.

Havlicek stressed that currently there is no evidence that suggests the presence of salmonella in any peanut butter or other foods containing peanuts within the schools.

“This is just a precautionary measure. We would rather err on the side of caution rather than risk any student or staff member becoming ill,” he noted.

Havlicek went on to say that the ban would probably be lifted when the federal government determines that peanut butter and related items no longer pose a health threat.