



**Marion County**  
OREGON  
Health & Human Services

To: Marion County Health Care Providers  
Fax number:

From: Marion County Health & Human Services  
Fax number: (503) 566-2920

Date: 04/09/2021

Regarding: Acute Non-Viral Hepatitis of Unknown Etiology Potentially Associated with an Alkaline Water Product

Phone number for follow-up: (503) 588-5621

# ALERT

**COPY AND DISTRIBUTE TO  
MARION COUNTY PROVIDERS**

## Providers:

Five cases of acute non-viral hepatitis of unknown etiology in children were reported to the Southern Nevada Health District in November and December of 2020. All these children had consumed an alkaline water product called "Real Water". **The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) advises clinicians and health departments to have a high index of suspicion for cases of acute non-viral hepatitis of unknown cause and to report any such cases to the local public health authority or OHA ([971-673-0024](tel:971-673-0024), [todd.hudson@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:todd.hudson@dhsosha.state.or.us)). Please share this information with your clinician networks.**

The children presented with vomiting, poor intake, and fatigue. Lab testing on the patients showed elevated hepatic transaminases, hyperbilirubinemia, coagulopathy, and a negative viral hepatitis serology panel. All patients required transfers to a pediatric tertiary-care specialty liver unit because of concerns for acute liver failure and the possible need for liver transplantations. All children recovered and were discharged home. In addition, several adults and other children living in the cases' households reported similar but mostly less severe symptoms including nausea, vomiting, anorexia, and fatigue.

Real Water alkaline water is available in 5 gallon, 3 gallon, 1 gallon, 1.5 liter, 1 liter, and 500 ml bottles, and concentrate. Bottles and concentrate products are available for purchase online and in stores nationwide. Real Water has issued a recall on their products. The FDA advises consumers, restaurants, and retailers not to drink, cook with, sell, or serve Real Water alkaline water or give it to pets until more information is known about the cause of the illnesses.

## OHA requests that clinicians:

1. Obtain a detailed exposure history when you suspect acute non-viral hepatitis. Possible associated etiologies include exposure to medications, contaminated water or food, dietary and herbal supplements, traditional or home remedies, wild-growing mushrooms and plants, and chemicals such as metals, solvents, paint thinners, or pesticides.
2. Obtain early consultation with or referral to a gastroenterologist or infectious disease specialist for medical workup and management of patients with signs and symptoms of acute hepatitis.
3. Contact the Oregon poison center ([1-800-222-1222](tel:1-800-222-1222)) if you suspect chemical or drug-induced liver toxicity.
4. Report any such cases to your local public health authority.

## For More Information:

· **FDA Investigation:** <https://www.fda.gov/food/outbreaks-foodborne-illness/investigation-acute-non-viral-hepatitis-illnesses-real-water-brand-alkaline-water-march-2021>

## FDA Case Reporting:

o [MedWatch](#)

<https://www.fda.gov/safety/medwatch-fda-safety-information-and-adverse-event-reporting-program>

- [Online](#)  
<https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/medwatch/>
- [Paper](#)  
<https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/medwatch/>
- [FDA Consumer Complaints](#)
- [Southern Nevada Health District FAQ](#)
- [American Association of Poison Control Centers](#)

*This HAN alert was sent to ACDP-PH and ORCD1, which includes LPHA and tribal public health administrators, health officers, communicable disease staff, and epidemiologists, and hospital IPs and ED managers.*

Oregon 24/7 disease reporting: [971-673-1111](tel:971-673-1111)