

NEWS

Baby dies after being given probiotic supplement at hospital, FDA investigating

The manufacturer, Infinant Health, voluntarily recalled the product.



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Oct. 3, 2023, 11:40 AM EDT / Source: **TODAY**

By Randi Richardson

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is investigating the death of a preterm infant who developed sepsis and later died as the result of ingesting live bacteria, which the FDA has linked to a probiotic supplement administered during in-hospital care.

The FDA did not disclose any identifying details about the infant, such as name, location, treating hospital or a timeline of events. It said in a Sept. 29 letter addressed to health care providers that the infant was born premature and the hospital had given the infant Evivo with MCT Oil, a probiotic that contains bacteria *Bifidobacterium longum*, as part of the treatment plan. The product is manufactured by Infinant Health.

"Genomic sequencing data demonstrate the bacterium that caused sepsis in this infant was a genetic match to the bacteria contained in this probiotic," the FDA said in its letter.

Sepsis is a medical emergency that occurs when the body reacts improperly to an infection, causing the organs to work poorly and possibly leading to septic shock and death, [according to Mayo Clinic](#).

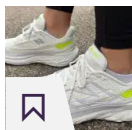


Infinant Health's Evivo with MCT Oil probiotic. Evivo

A spokesperson for Infinant Health told TODAY.com in a statement that it is cooperating with the investigation and that patient safety is its top priority. The company recalled the probiotic and has informed its health care providers, it said.

"Through ongoing discussions with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, we have agreed to stop shipping and voluntarily recall our probiotic Evivo with MCT Oil," the company said. "That product was used by health care professionals in hospital settings, including neonatal care for preterm infants."

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The FDA has not approved “any probiotic product for use as a drug or biological product in infants,” the letter says, so the agency puts them at risk of “invasive, potentially fatal disease caused by the bacteria or fungi contained in probiotics.”

The American Academy of Pediatrics, the nation's leading pediatricians' group, also advises against treating preterm infants with probiotics.

The FDA said in its letter that it does not endorse “unapproved, unlicensed probiotics” to treat preterm infants and warned health care providers of the usage risks.

“Healthcare providers should be aware that these products have not undergone the FDA’s rigorous premarket review evaluation for safety and effectiveness, nor have they been evaluated for compliance with the agency’s rigorous manufacturing and testing standards for drugs and biological products, including testing for extraneous organisms,” the FDA said.

Infinant Health said it plans to work with the FDA to get “approval of the use of our MCT oil product in hospital settings” and stressed that its Envivo powder product remains on shelves, as it “has been proven to offer significant nutritional benefits to full term infants.”

What to know about babies and probiotics

The FDA stressed in its letter that it has not approved any probiotic supplements for use in infants. The AAP also said, based on current evidence, it doesn't support regularly using probiotics in preterm infants, especially those weighing less than 1,000 grams at birth.

That said, probiotic products marketed for use in babies are readily available in stores and online. Probiotics are live organisms that promote a healthy balance in the gut.

While early research shows probiotic foods or supplements may be able to help older babies with certain conditions, such as colic or acid reflux, more research is needed to determine if probiotics benefit babies and small children, according to Hackensack Meridian Health.

It is not recommended to give probiotics to kids under 6 months old, and parents and caregivers should always discuss with a health care provider before adding probiotics to a child's diet.



Randi Richardson

Randi Richardson is a reporter for NBC News' TODAY.com based in Brooklyn.

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Man arrested in Long Island for allegedly stalking Drew Barrymore, looking for her home, police say

Chad Michael Busto was riding a bicycle into private driveways in the Hamptons town of Sagaponack and telling people he was looking for Barrymore's house, police said.



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No, thank you.

Busto was "riding a bicycle up into private driveways" in the town of Sagaponack and telling people "he was looking for Drew Barrymore's residence," Southampton police said. He appeared to leave the area after the encounter with the officers.

Patrol officers then notified the detective division, which did a follow-up investigation. As a result, police issued a charge for stalking and "a wanted flyer was distributed to neighboring agencies."

Officers from the East Hampton Town police took Busto into custody on the afternoon of Aug. 24 and turned him over to Southampton detectives.

Busto, of Washington, D.C., was charged with stalking in the fourth degree, a class B misdemeanor. Busto was arraigned and released on Aug. 25, and is due back in court Sept. 12. A judge ordered him to wear an ankle monitor and to stay away from Barrymore.

Police also said Busto was suspected of stalking the 48-year-old actor and TV host "due to previous incidents."

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On Friday, Southampton Police confirmed to TODAY.com that Busto was the same person who charged the stage during an appearance Barrymore was making on Aug. 21 in New York City.

In a clip of the incident circulating on social media, a man called out Barrymore's name, visibly startling her, and identified himself as Busto.

"I'm Chad Michael Busto," the man said, as he approached the stage at 92nd Street Y, a cultural center on Manhattan's Upper East Side. "You know who I am."

Security intervened and escorted the man away, while Barrymore and her co-host at the panel event, actor and singer Reneé Rapp, hurried off the stage together.



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NEWS

Escaped peacock that reportedly bit man on New York City sidewalk has returned to zoo

The community neighboring the Bronx Zoo named the peacock Raul.

April 27, 2023, 3:59 PM EDT / Source: TODAY

By Randi Richardson

A peacock has returned to the Bronx Zoo after an eventful night out in New York City.

Raul, the name given to the bird by the neighboring community, flew off zoo property April 26, according to [NBC New York](#). A passerby told the station that the peacock bit him after he tried to catch the escaped bird at around 8 p.m. Wednesday. Raul remained off zoo premises overnight before returning to the zoo less than 24 hours later.

"It flew back to the zoo on its own, as expected," Max Pulsinelli, executive director of communications at Wildlife Conservation Society, which owns the Bronx Zoo, said in a statement to TODAY.com.



Raul, the escaped New York City peacock. WNBC

Zoo staff monitored the bird as it started to move around at dawn Thursday, and the bird arrived back at the Bronx Zoo "under his own initiative" at 11:19 a.m. on April 27, the zoo said in a statement.

"We had confidence in our knowledge of bird behavior to predict how he would behave if given the chance to do so without interference," the zoo said. "We were confident in our staffs' ability to handle the situation."

The man, who [NBC New York](#) did not name, told the station that he tried to capture the escaped peacock, which was two blocks away from the zoo.

"It just started running up the hill towards traffic," the man said. "You know, we had to try and keep the bird safe. We chased him, I trapped him inside the gate, he got tired of the gate and then tried to peck me."

A witness, who was not named by [NBC New York](#), told the station that Raul then flew into a nearby tree, which is a peacock's preferred sleep setting.

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The New York City fire department tells TODAY.com in a statement that it received a call about an incident near the Bronx Zoo at 8:20 p.m. and sent a team for “reports of a minor injury.”

“One patient was treated on scene, but refused transport,” the statement said.

FDNY did not confirm to TODAY.com whether it was due to the peacock or an animal bite.

Peacocks are free-roaming birds. The Bronx Zoo has hundreds of peacocks, according to [NBC New York](#).



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POLITICS

'The Good Doctor' actor Hill Harper enters Senate race in Michigan

The 57-year-old actor announced his Senate bid Monday in a video addressed to his 12-year-old son.



Actor Hill Harper attends the 2018 PaleyFest screening of ABC's 'The Good Doctor' at the Dolby Theater on March 22, 2018, in Hollywood, Valerie Macon / AFP via Getty Images

July 10, 2023, 10:56 AM EDT

By Randi Richardson

Actor Hill Harper announced his bid July 10 to represent Michigan as a Democrat in the United States Senate.

"We can all feel it: D.C just isn't getting things done for people," he wrote in his announcement tweet.

"We need representatives who'll take on special interests, get money out of politics, and make our government work for all of us. That's why today, I'm announcing my campaign for U.S. Senate in Michigan!"

The "Good Doctor" actor, 57, graduated from Brown University, attended Harvard Law School and currently lives in Detroit.

In the announcement, Harper, who is also known for his role on "CSI: NY," included a video he says he recorded for his son, Pierce.

In the video, he said he knows this journey will be hard for Pierce, but the 12-year-old is also the reason why he's running.

Hill Harper 

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We can all feel it: D.C just isn't getting things do people.

We need representatives who'll take on special i
money out of politics, and make our governmer
of us.

That's why today, I'm announcing my campaign
Senate in Michigan! 🙌

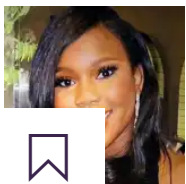
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"Dear Pierce, I'm recording this video for you because I'm about to make a big announcement and it's going to be tough for us," Harper says in the video.

"Now I'm not going to be able to tuck you in every night or do our nighttime prayer together, but these are sacrifices so many hard working families have to make every single day," Harper continues.

In the video, Harper lists his qualifications, saying he started a non-profit, owned a small business in Detroit, beat cancer and served on former President Barack Obama's cancer panel, and is a best-selling author.

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"But for me, adopting you is the greatest thing I've done in my life," he said, later adding that conversations with his son about guns contributed to launching a campaign.

"When you told me that you were afraid to go to school because of shootings, that's not freedom ... Every child in every neighborhood in every town across Michigan deserves the freedom to flourish," Harper says.

"I love you son and I hope to make you proud," Harper says.

The Senate seat is up for grabs since its current occupant, Sen. Debbie Stabenow, said in January that she will not seek a fifth term in 2024. Harper is the sixth person to vie for the opening.

His main competitor is expected to be current U.S. Rep. Elissa Slotkin, who represents Michigan's 7th district, according to the Associated Press.



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