



## Infection reports

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### Enteric

#### Listeriosis in England and Wales in 2014: summary report

Listeriosis is a foodborne illness caused by the bacterium *Listeria monocytogenes*. It is a rare and severe infection predominantly affecting the elderly, people with weakened immunity, pregnant women and their unborn or new-born babies. In England and Wales, it is one of the major causes of death by foodborne illness.

In the last decade (2005-2014) an average of 180 cases was reported annually, a 23% increase from the previous decade (1995-2004) where an average of 137 cases was reported (figure 1). This increase could be a result of the rise in cases from ethnic minority groups and cases of bacteraemia in the elderly. In 2014, the number of reported cases increased by 5.3% from 2013 with 169 cases reported.

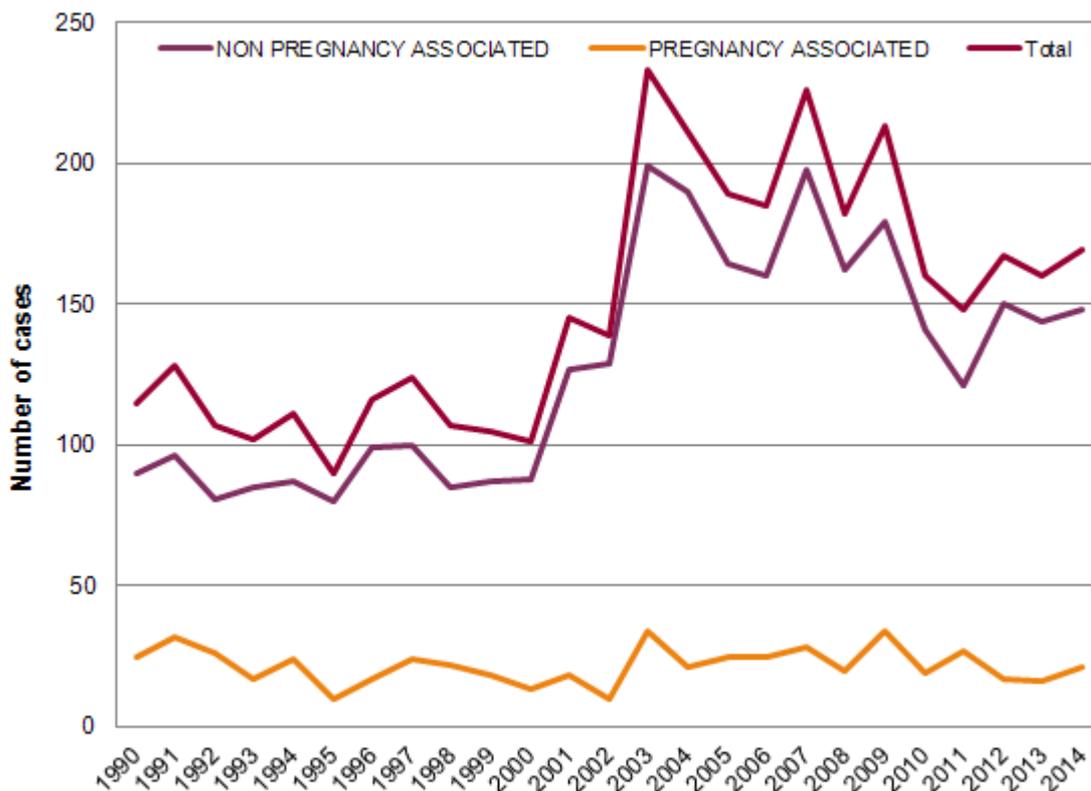
Eighty seven per cent of the reported cases were non-pregnancy associated and 12.4% were pregnancy associated. Males accounted for 45.6% (77/169) of cases while females accounted for 54.4% (92/169). Sixty-five per cent (110/169) of reported cases were over 60 years of age and 40.9% (45/110) of these were between 70 to 79 years old. Eight per cent (14/169) of cases were between 0 and 9 years old and 78% (11/14) of these were infants. In previous years, a large proportion of female cases were pregnancy related in the age group 20-39 years; however, in 2014, there was also a high proportion of females that were non-pregnancy-related cases in the age groups 0-9 years, 30-39 years and 70-79 years (figure 2). It is too soon to speculate on whether this change in age and gender distribution is the start of a new trend or simply a chance finding.

The clinical presentation of 79.2% (94/169) of cases was bacteraemia, and 15.3% (12/169) of cases presented with meningitis. In previous years, bacteraemia has been the predominant clinical presentation in cases 60 years and above. This trend continues in 2014 where 70% of the bacteraemia cases were aged 60 and above (figure 3).

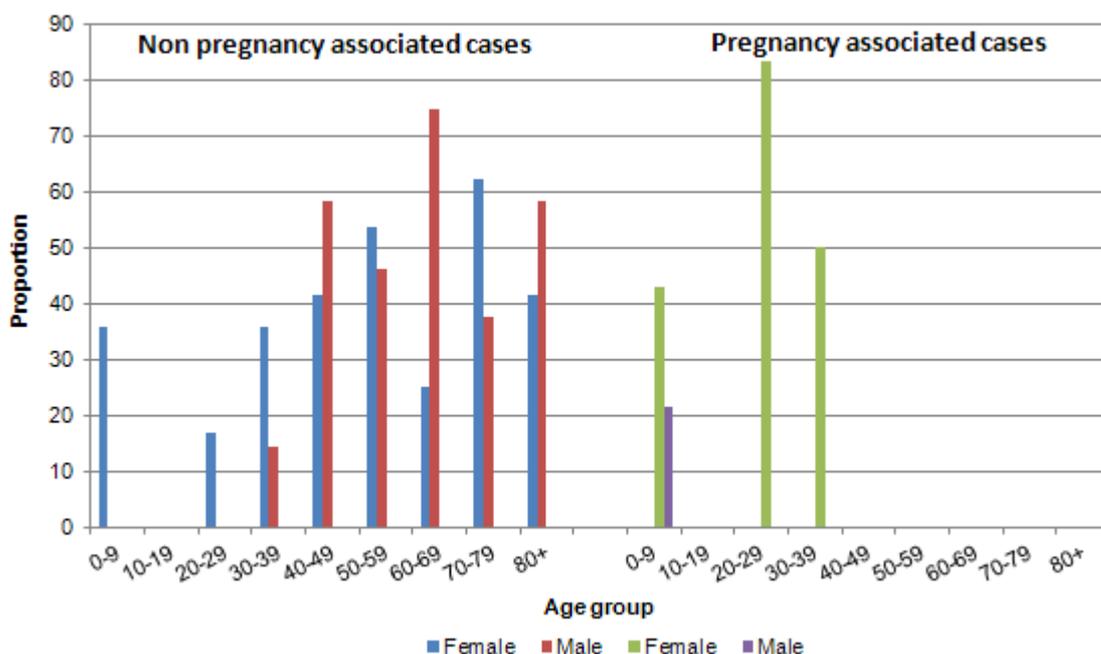
The presence or absence of an underlying condition was recorded for 67.4% (114/169) of cases. Of these, malignancy was the most common underlying condition with 26.3% (30/114) of

cases reporting a form of cancer. Sixteen per cent (19/114) of cases reported an auto-immune disease such as arthritis or Chron’s disease. Twelve per cent (14/114) of cases reported more than one underlying condition and 21% (24/114) reported no underlying condition of which nine of the cases were pregnancy associated (see table).

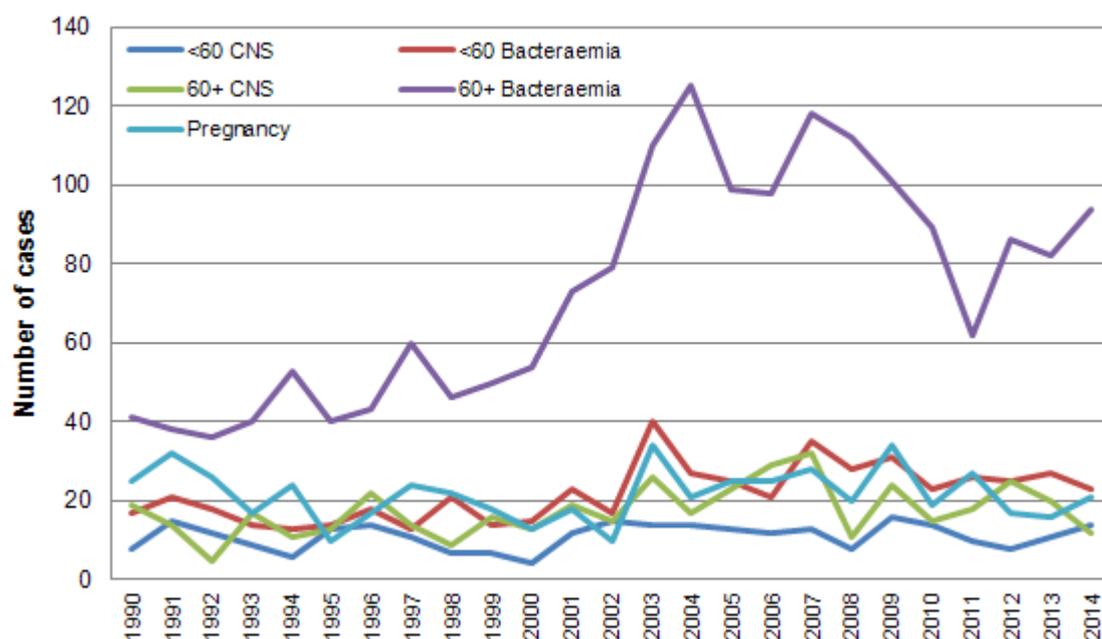
**Figure 1. Numbers of cases of listeriosis by patient type, 1990-2014**



**Figure 2. Age-gender distribution of listeriosis cases in 2014**



**Figure 3. Distribution of cases by age and clinical presentation in England and Wales, 1990-2014**



**Underlying conditions reported by cases**

UNDERLYING CONDION REPORTED	NUMBER OF CASES	PROPORTION OF CASES
<b>Malignancy</b>	30	26.32
<b>Auto-immune disorders</b>	19	16.67
<b>Multiple conditions</b>	14	12.28
<b>Alcoholism</b>	7	6.14
<b>Renal disease</b>	7	6.14
<b>Other underlying conditions</b>	5	4.39
<b>Cardiovascular</b>	3	2.63
<b>Diabetes</b>	2	1.75
<b>Immunosuppressed</b>	1	0.88
<b>Not specified</b>	1	0.88
<b>Recent post operation</b>	1	0.88
<b>No underlying condition</b>	24	21.05