

Tiger Brands shuts Durban bakery following Covid-19 infections

Tiger Brands will temporarily close its Durban Albany bakery as a precautionary measure after some staff members tested positive for Covid-19.



The FMCG giant said in a statement that an employee who reported for duty was advised to seek medical attention after reporting feeling ill with flu-like symptoms. A Covid-19 test was conducted, and the results were received on Thursday 9 April, confirming Covid 19.

"As per the NICD protocol, all employees who had come into close contact with the individual were identified and sent for precautionary testing and self-isolation as they were asymptomatic. The testing was subsequently extended to all staff in the admin building where the first patient worked. These results were received yesterday 15 April," Tiger Brands said.

Twelve employees tested positive for coronavirus and are in self-isolation. The company notes that all of these employees work in the administration building and none of these employees work on the production line or are involved in the delivery of product to our customers.



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7 Apr 2020



Addressing food safety fears

"Naturally, we appreciate that this may cause concerns around food safety regarding bread. Covid-19 is a novel virus and hence we are guided by the research provided by the Department of Health and the NICD, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other recognised disease control bodies globally.

"We would like to provide the following information to consumers regarding the safety of food. According to the WHO, NICD and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), there is currently no evidence that food is a likely source or route of transmission of the virus. The World Health Organisation has stated that experiences from previous outbreaks of related coronaviruses shows that transmission through food consumption did not occur.

"Nonetheless, good food hygiene – such as washing your hands before handling food, and using clean utensils and cutting boards, is pivotal food safety behaviour and should be taken seriously.



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Lauren Hartzberg 25 Feb 2020



Tiger Brands added that its bread manufacturing process is highly automated - from mixing, to baking, to slicing, to sealing into tamper-proof bags and crating. In the event of a positive Covid-19 case, the company says it has developed specific protocols to mitigate the risk of any environmental or surface contamination. This includes isolation and sanitising of the packaged product, all surfaces in the factory and all delivery trucks.

As a result of the bakery's closure, the bread produced in this facility yesterday has not been dispatched to the market.

"As a company, we have followed a pre-emptive preparatory approach to quickly, safely and responsibly respond to both suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19 among employees. This includes a well-developed health and safety protocol specifically designed for Covid-19, which is inclusive of the steps that each site will follow in the case of a suspected or confirmed Covid-19 case. It is also important to note that Covid-19 is a notifiable disease and that in the event of a confirmed case, the protocols outlined by the Department of Health and the NICD are triggered," the company concluded.

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