

CFS finds excessive coagulase-positive staphylococci organisms in fried pad thai noodle sample

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (June 6) announced that a sample of Thai-style fried pad thai noodles with shrimps was found to contain an excessive amount of coagulase-positive staphylococci. The CFS is following up on the case.

A CFS spokesman said, "Following up on a food complaint, the CFS took the above-mentioned sample from a restaurant in Tsim Sha Tsui for testing. The result showed that the food sample contained coagulase-positive staphylococci at a level of 5 million organisms per gram. Under the Microbiological Guidelines for Food, if ready-to-eat food contains coagulase-positive staphylococci at a level of more than 10 000 organisms per gram, it is considered unsatisfactory, i.e. potentially injurious to health and/or unfit for human consumption."

The CFS has informed the restaurant concerned of the irregularity and instructed it to suspend the sale of the food concerned. The CFS has also provided health education on food safety and hygiene to the person-in-charge and staff of the restaurant, and requested it to review and improve the food production process and carry out thorough cleaning and disinfection.

According to Section 54 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap 132), all food for sale in Hong Kong, locally produced or imported, should be fit for human consumption. An offender is subject to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months upon conviction.

"Coagulase-positive staphylococci can produce enterotoxins that cause food poisoning. Common symptoms include nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain, often accompanied by diarrhoea," he added.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the case and take appropriate action to safeguard food safety and public health.