

# CFS urges public not to consume boletes suspected to contain mixture of species including inedible mushrooms

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (July 25) called on the public not to consume a batch of loose boletes as the product is suspected to contain a mixture of species including inedible species.

A CFS spokesman said, "The CFS is following up on a food poisoning case suspected to have been caused by consuming mushrooms, which was referred earlier by the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health, and collected samples from the restaurant concerned in Wong Tai Sin for testing during its investigation. According to the assessment by a mycologist on the samples, the boletes concerned contained inedible species of mushrooms."

The spokesman continued, "A preliminary investigation showed that the affected product was solely distributed to a supplier after import, and was sold as a loose item. The CFS has instructed the supplier to stop sales, remove from shelves the affected product, and initiate a recall on all boletes sold after May 31 this year. For enquiries on the concerned product, members of the public may call the supplier's hotline at 2546 9889 during office hours."

The CFS urged members of the public who have purchased and still possess the affected product to stop consuming it, and to seek medical advice immediately if symptoms develop after consuming the product.

Mushroom poisoning is generally acute and manifested by a variety of symptoms, depending on the species and amount consumed. The incubation period is usually short. Gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain are the commonest symptoms. Sometimes distinguishing features such as extreme thirst, profuse sweating, hallucination, coma and other neurological symptoms may occur.

Consumers are advised to heed the following points when buying, handling and eating mushrooms:

- \* Do not buy mushroom products which may contain a mix of unknown species;
- \* Do not buy mushrooms which look unhygienic (with growing substrates left with the product) or show signs of spoilage (with coloured spots/abnormal smell/slime, etc);
- \* Wash and cook mushrooms thoroughly before consumption;
- \* Mushrooms should be kept in the refrigerator if overnight soaking is needed; and
- \* Seek medical treatment immediately if mushroom poisoning is suspected.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the case and take necessary action to safeguard food safety and public health. An investigation is ongoing.