

CFS urges public not to consume porcini mushrooms suspected to contain mixture of species including inedible or poisonous mushrooms

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (September 21) called on the public to stop consuming porcini mushrooms sold at a booth at an exhibition in Hong Kong as the mushrooms concerned were suspected to contain mixture of edible species as well as inedible or poisonous species.

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A CFS spokesman said, "The CFS is following up on a food poisoning case suspected to have been caused by consuming porcini mushrooms, which was referred earlier by the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health. Investigations showed that the patient concerned had consumed the porcini mushrooms purchased from the booth at the exhibition. The booth number was GH-B23 of Judu Yunan at the Food Expo."

The CFS appealed to members of the public who had purchased porcini mushrooms from the above-mentioned booth at the exhibition held from August 17 to 21 not to consume them. If symptoms develop after consuming the food, they should seek medical advice as soon as possible.

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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 other features such as extreme thirst, profuse sweating, hallucination, coma and other neurological symptoms may occur.

Furthermore, consumers are advised to heed the following points when buying and eating fresh mushrooms:

- * Do not buy mushroom products which are doubted to have carried mixing 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; and
 - * Seek medical treatment immediately if mushroom poisoning is suspected.
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The CFS will continue to follow up and take necessary action to safeguard food safety and public health. The investigation is ongoing.