

CHP follows up two food poisoning outbreak clusters

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 4) following up two food poisoning outbreak clusters.

The CHP issued a press release on December 30 (www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202312/30/P2023123000548.htm) to remind members of the public about two food poisoning outbreak clusters involving nine people, who developed abdominal pain and diarrhoea after consuming catering food. The food poisoning might have been caused by infection of *Clostridium perfringens* or *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*.

Investigations of the Centre for Food Safety of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department revealed that the food factory might have cooked the food inadequately and stored the food under improper temperatures for a long period of time.

Relevant food items suspected to have caused food poisoning were produced on December 21 and 25 last year, and were distributed to clients for consumption by catering delivery. As long holiday and festive celebration was involved, the CHP could not rule out that the affected food items have been supplied to clients of more than two clusters. As such, the CHP reminded members of the public who have consumed catering food (including diced beef, shrimps and scallops pasta and beef ribs in red wine sauce) from "Food Fever" from December 21 to 25 last year and presented with gastro-intestinal disease symptoms, to contact the CHP by calling hotline (2125 2372) from Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) from 9am to 5.30pm and seek medical attention.

The CHP appealed to members of the public to patronise licensed and reliable restaurants if they need to order food.

The CHP said that food poisoning caused by *Clostridium perfringens* is usually associated with meat and meat products that are cross-contaminated, inadequately cooked or stored under sub-optimal temperature for prolonged period. The incubation period ranges from 6 to 24 hours (usually 10 to 12 hours). Severe abdominal pain and acute diarrhoea are common symptoms. Also, food poisoning caused by *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* is usually associated with undercooked seafood or cooked food that are cross-contaminated by raw seafood, with incubation period ranging from 4 to 30 hours (usually 12 to 24 hours). Common symptoms include abdominal pain, diarrhoea, vomiting, and/or fever.