

CHP investigates and reports update on suspected food poisoning outbreaks in Yuen Long and Southern District

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (February 4) investigating a suspected outbreak of food poisoning at a secondary school in Yuen Long and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent food-borne diseases.

The outbreak involved 15 males and 16 females aged 4 to 56 who developed abdominal pain, nausea and diarrhoea about two to 20 hours after consuming food provided by a caterer on February 1 afternoon. Four of them sought medical attention but none required hospitalisation. All affected persons are in a stable condition.

"We have alerted the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) to the incident and investigations are ongoing," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Meanwhile, the CHP reported an update on its investigation announced on February 1 into an outbreak of suspected food poisoning at an institution in Southern District. 40 additional affected persons were identified, including 25 males and 15 females aged 18 to 28 who developed abdominal pain and diarrhoea about 15 to 25 hours after having lunch at the institution on January 29. All of the affected persons did not seek medical attention and have been in a stable condition. This brings the total number of persons affected to 65.

To prevent food-borne diseases, members of the public are reminded to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene at all times. When enjoying delivered food and dining out:

- Choose reliable catering supplier;
- Arrange food to be delivered at appropriate timing and consume the food immediately;
- Keep cold dishes at four degrees Celsius or below and hot-served foods above 60 degrees Celsius;
- Food should not be left at room temperature for more than two hours;
- Patronise only reliable and licensed restaurants;
- Avoid eating raw seafood;
- Be a discerning consumer in choosing cold dishes, including sashimi, sushi and raw oysters, at a buffet;
- Ensure food is thoroughly cooked before eating during a hot pot or barbecue meal;
- Handle raw and cooked foods carefully and separate them completely during the cooking process;
- Use two sets of chopsticks and utensils to handle raw and cooked food;
- Do not patronise illegal food hawkers;
- Drink boiled water;

- Do not try to use salt, vinegar, wine and wasabi to kill bacteria as they are not effective; and
- Always wash hands before eating and after going to the toilet.