

CHP investigates case of food poisoning

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (May 14) investigating a food poisoning case involving three persons who had eaten porcini mushrooms.

The three patients, a man and two women, aged 22 to 50, presented with vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain and nausea around four hours after having dinner with porcini mushrooms purchased from a store in Tuen Mun on April 27 and cooked at home that evening. All patients were admitted to the Accident and Emergency Department of Tuen Mun Hospital on April 28, have been in a stable condition and were discharged on the same day upon management.

The CHP has also alerted the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to the incident and the investigations are ongoing.

"Mushroom poisoning is generally acute. Common presentations include gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain appearing shortly after ingestion. Depending on the mushroom species, patients may also have other symptoms like profuse sweating, hallucination, coma or other neurological symptoms, as well as liver failure. Death may result in severe cases," a CHP spokesman said.

"We advise the public to buy mushrooms from reputable and reliable suppliers and not to buy mushroom products which may be mixed with unknown species. Members of the public should not pick wild mushrooms for consumption as it is difficult to distinguish edible mushroom species from inedible ones. Mixing of edible species with inedible or poisonous species of mushroom will not dilute toxicity. Cooking in most cases does not destroy toxicity," the spokesman added.

"If mushroom poisoning is suspected, the patient should seek immediate medical attention and bring along any available remnant for identification," the spokesman said.