

CHP investigates food poisoning cluster

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (May 9) investigating one food poisoning cluster affecting 10 persons, and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent foodborne diseases.

The cluster involved four males and six females, aged between 1 and 37, who developed abdominal pain, diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting, and fever about 10 to 25 hours after having dinner at a restaurant in To Kwa Wan on May 3. Initial investigations by the CHP revealed that the affected persons had consumed common food. Two of the affected persons have sought medical advice and none required hospitalisation. Their stool specimens were positive for Salmonella upon laboratory testing. All affected persons are in stable condition.

The personnel from the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department have conducted inspections at the restaurant and instructed the premises to stop selling the food items concerned. The investigations of the CHP and the CFS are ongoing, including the testing of food samples.

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

- 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;
- Pre-cooked or leftover foods should be stored and reheated properly before consumption;
- Ensure food is thoroughly cooked before eating during a hotpot 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 foods;
- Do not patronise illegal food hawkers;
- Drink boiled water;
- Do not try to use salt, vinegar, wine or wasabi to kill bacteria as they are not effective; and
- Always wash hands before eating and after going to the toilet.