

CHP investigates imported cluster of bacillary dysentery cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 4) investigating an imported cluster of bacillary dysentery infection affecting six persons, and reminded members of the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent infection.

The cluster involves three male and three female participants of a tour group which travelled from Hong Kong to Türkiye. The six of them, aged between 38 and 60, presented with symptoms of acute gastroenteritis including abdominal pain, diarrhoea and vomiting since December 21 last year. Four of them sought medical consultation and one of them required hospitalisation. All the affected persons are in stable condition. The stool specimens of one person yielded *Shigella sonnei*.

An epidemiological investigation by the CHP revealed that the tour group comprised 10 persons and had stayed in Türkiye from December 14 to 22 last year. They had meals at various restaurants and hotels there. According to the epidemiological investigation and information such as incubation periods of the patients, the CHP believes that the infection sources are the following restaurants/hotels:

Area	Name of restaurant
Nevşehir	Restaurant at Avrasya Hotel
Nevşehir	Dede Efendi Restaurant
Bolu	Restaurant at Koru Hotel
Ankara	Anit restaurant

The investigation is ongoing. Meanwhile, the CHP appealed to members of the public who have visited Türkiye, have a similar travel history, and consumed food at the aforementioned restaurants in mid to late December last year to seek medical attention as soon as possible if they develop relevant symptoms. They should also notify doctors about their travel history and the possibility of involving bacillary dysentery.

Bacillary dysentery is an intestinal infection caused by a group of *Shigella* bacteria which can be found in the human gut. It is transmitted directly by the faecal material of a patient/carrier or indirectly through contaminated food and water. It is also a cause of travellers' diarrhoea.

A spokesman for the CHP advised members of the public to maintain good personal and environmental hygiene to avoid infection. They should also take heed of the following:

- wash hands properly with soap and water before eating or handling food,

- and after going to the toilet or changing diapers;
- avoid high-risk food like shellfish, raw food or semi-cooked food;
 - boil water and cook food thoroughly before consumption;
 - purchase fresh food from reliable sources, and do not patronise unlicensed street vendors; and
 - seek medical attention when they have symptoms of fever and diarrhoea, especially bloody diarrhoea.

For more details, please visit CHP's [bacillary dysentery page](#).