

CHP investigates suspected case of food poisoning

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (November 30) investigating a suspected food poisoning case involving consumption of mushrooms.

The case involves one male and two females aged 16 to 52, who developed vomiting and diarrhoea about two to four hours after consuming recently purchased mushrooms, cooked at home on November 28. The patients sought medical attention at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Prince of Wales Hospital on November 29. They are in stable condition.

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

"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.