

CHP investigates suspected case of food poisoning

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (February 5) investigating a suspected food poisoning case involving consumption of mushrooms.

The case involves two males and two females aged 9 to 49, who developed nausea, vomiting and abdominal discomfort about three to four hours after consuming mushrooms of unknown source, which have been stored for a few months and cooked at home on February 4. The patients sought medical attention at Prince of Wales Hospital today. They are in stable condition and no hospitalisation is required.

"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.