

CHP investigates suspected food poisoning case related to wild mushrooms

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 28) investigating a suspected case of food poisoning related to the consumption of wild mushrooms, and urged the public not to collect and eat wild mushrooms from parks or the countryside.

A 65-year-old male patient developed vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain and dizziness, about twelve hours after consuming mushrooms at home on January 26. The patient sought medical attention at the Accident and Emergency Department of Prince of Wales Hospital yesterday (January 27) and was admitted to the hospital for further management. He has been in a stable condition.

Initial investigations revealed that the patient had consumed wild mushrooms picked from the hillside near Wong Tai Sin and Sha Tin on January 25. The CHP 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 such as profuse sweating, hallucinations, 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 mushrooms 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.