

CHP investigates suspected food poisoning cluster

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (July 5) investigating a suspected food poisoning cluster affecting 14 persons, and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent foodborne diseases.

The cluster involved five males and nine females, aged 2 to 72, who developed abdominal pain, fever, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea, about 24 to 61 hours after having dinner at a restaurant in Tsuen Wan on July 2.

Six of the affected persons sought medical advice and one of them required hospitalisation. All affected persons are in stable condition.

Epidemiological investigations of the CHP revealed that the cluster might have been caused by Salmonella. The CHP is arranging the collection of stool specimen of patients for testing in order to ascertain the source of infection. It is suspected the food concerned was roasted suckling pig.

The Centre for Food Safety of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has conducted an inspection at the restaurant today. The investigation is ongoing.

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;
- 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.