

CHP investigates suspected food poisoning outbreak

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (September 14) investigating a suspected outbreak of food poisoning affecting 17 persons, and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent food-borne diseases.

The patients, comprising nine males and eight females aged one to 61, developed abdominal pain, diarrhoea and vomiting about nine to 52 hours after having a dinner banquet at a restaurant in Ap Lei Chau on September 9.

Twelve of them sought medical attention but none required hospitalisation. All affected persons are in a stable condition.

"We have alerted the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to the incident and investigations are ongoing," a spokesman for the CHP said.

To prevent food-borne 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 hot pot 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 food;
- Do not patronise illegal food hawkers;
- Drink boiled water;
- Do not try to use salt, vinegar, wine and wasabi to kill bacteria as they are not effective; and
- Always wash hands before eating and after going to the toilet.