

CHP investigates suspected food poisoning outbreak

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 16) investigating a suspected food poisoning outbreak affecting 19 persons. The CHP reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent food-borne diseases.

The patients, comprising three men and 16 women aged 23 to 61, developed abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and fever about five to 46 hours after having dinner at a food premises in Southern District on January 10.

Seven of the affected persons sought medical advice. Among them, one required hospitalisation and was discharged after treatment. They have been in 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.