

CHP investigates three food poisoning clusters

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (June 12) investigating three epidemiologically linked food poisoning clusters affecting six persons, involving three restaurants located in Grand Hyatt Hong Kong hotel. The CHP reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent foodborne diseases.

The first cluster involved four boys aged between 3 and 5, who developed abdominal pain, fever, nausea and vomiting about 36.5 hours after having dinner at Grand Café in Grand Hyatt Hong Kong hotel on June 1.

The second cluster involved a six-year-old boy, who developed similar symptoms about 31 hours after having lunch at Grissini restaurant in the hotel on June 2.

The third cluster involved a six-year-old girl, who developed similar symptoms about 17 hours after having dinner at One Harbour Road restaurant in the hotel on June 2.

All affected persons have sought medical advice. Four of them required hospitalisation and were discharged after treatment. The stool specimens of five affected persons were positive for Salmonella upon laboratory testing. All patients are in stable condition.

Initial investigations by the CHP revealed that the affected persons had consumed common food. The CHP appeals that persons who have patronised Grand Café, Grissini or One Harbour Road in Grand Hyatt Hong Kong hotel on June 1 and June 2 after which they presented with relevant acute gastroenteritis symptoms such as abdominal pain, fever, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea, should seek medical attention and contact the CHP immediately. The CHP has set up an enquiry hotline (2125 2371) which operates from Monday to Friday from 9am to 5.30pm.

The personnel from the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department have conducted an inspection at the restaurants and instructed the concerned premises to suspend the production and sale of relevant food and carry out cleaning and disinfection of the premises. The investigations of the CHP and the CFS are ongoing, including the testing of food and environmental samples.

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;
- Pre-cooked or leftover foods should be stored and reheated properly before consumption;
- 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.