

CHP investigates two food poisoning clusters

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (June 4) investigating two epidemiologically linked food poisoning clusters affecting four persons, and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent foodborne diseases.

The first cluster involved a 6-year-old girl and a 10-year-old boy, who developed abdominal pain, diarrhoea, vomiting, and fever about 15 hours after having dinner at a restaurant in Tsuen Wan on May 31.

The other cluster involved two girls aged 6 and 8 respectively, who developed similar symptoms about 10 to 24 hours after consuming takeaway food purchased from the same restaurant at night on the same day.

All affected persons have sought medical advice and are in stable condition.

Initial investigations by the CHP revealed that the affected persons had consumed common food and the food concerned was spaghetti with meat sauce, potato wedges, corn kernels and jelly. The stool specimens of two affected persons were positive for Salmonella upon laboratory testing.

The personnel from the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department have conducted an inspection at the restaurant and instructed the concerned premises to suspend the 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.