

CHP investigates two suspected food poisoning clusters

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (August 18) investigating two suspected food poisoning clusters affecting five persons, and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent foodborne diseases.

The first cluster involved two females, aged 29 and 30, who developed abdominal pain, diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting and fever about 13.5 to 15 hours after having dinner at a restaurant in Tsim Sha Tsui on August 15.

The other cluster involved three females, aged 22 to 49, who developed abdominal pain, diarrhoea, nausea and fever about 13 to 14 hours after having dinner at the same restaurant on the same day.

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

Initial investigations of the CHP revealed that the affected persons had consumed common food and the food concerned was pancake. The poisoning might have been caused by Salmonella.

The personnel from the CHP and the Centre for Food Safety of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today conducted an inspection at the restaurant. The CHP's 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;
- 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.