

CHP investigates two suspected food poisoning clusters

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (March 5) 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 one male and two females, aged between 26 and 30, who developed abdominal pain, diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting, and fever about 15 to 44 hours after having dinner at a restaurant in Wan Chai on March 2.

The other cluster involved two 29-year-old females, who developed abdominal pain, diarrhoea, nausea and vomiting about 25 to 28 hours after having dinner from the same restaurant on March 3.

All of the affected persons have not sought medical advice. They are in stable condition.

Initial investigations of the CHP revealed that the affected persons had consumed common food and the food concerned were raw oysters and scallops. The incident might have been caused by norovirus and/or *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*.

The personnel from the Centre for Food Safety of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department have 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.