

Call for public to stop consuming boletes suspected to contain mixture of species including inedible or poisonous mushrooms

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (October 11) called on the public to stop consuming loose-pack boletes sold at a shop in Sheung Wan as the mushrooms concerned were suspected to contain inedible or poisonous species of mushrooms.

A CFS spokesman said, "The CFS is following up on a food poisoning case suspected to have been caused by consuming boletus, which was referred earlier by the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health. According to an assessment by a mycologist, the mushroom dish concerned contained inedible or poisonous species of mushrooms. Follow-up investigation showed that the mushrooms concerned came from a shop in Sheung Wan and were already sold out. The shop has initiated a recall according to the CFS' instructions. Members of the public may call the shop at 2517 7333 for enquiries during office hours."

The CFS appealed to members of the public who had purchased boletes from the abovementioned shop earlier not to consume them. If symptoms develop after consuming the food, they should seek medical advice as soon as possible.

Mushroom poisoning is generally acute and manifested by a variety of symptoms, depending on the species and amount consumed. The incubation period is usually short. Gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain are the commonest symptoms. Sometimes distinguishing features such as extreme thirst, profuse sweating, hallucination, coma and other neurological symptoms may occur.

Consumers are advised to heed the following points when buying and eating fresh mushrooms:

- Do not buy mushroom products which are doubted to have carried a mix of unknown species;
- Do not buy mushrooms which look unhygienic (with growing substrates left with the product) or show signs of spoilage (with coloured spots/abnormal smell/slime, etc);
- Wash and cook mushrooms thoroughly before consumption; and
- Seek medical treatment immediately if mushroom poisoning is suspected.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the case and take necessary action to safeguard food safety and public health.