

CHP investigates three suspected food poisoning clusters

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (August 10) investigating three suspected food poisoning clusters affecting seven persons, and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent food-borne diseases.

The first cluster involved one man and one woman, aged 31 to 35, who developed diarrhoea, abdominal pain and vomiting about 14 to 31 hours after consuming food bought from a food premises in Sai Wan Ho in the small hours of August 5.

The second cluster involved two males and one female, aged 11 to 25, who developed similar symptoms about 10 to 13 hours after consuming food at another food premises in Sai Wan Ho at night on August 5.

The third cluster involved one man and one woman, aged 29 to 32, who developed similar symptoms about 15 to 16 hours after consuming food at the same food premises as the second cluster on the same night.

Six of the affected persons have sought medical advice. Among them, two required hospitalisation and one has been discharged upon hospitalisation. All patients are in a stable condition.

"Initial investigation revealed that all those affected had consumed the same dessert. We have alerted the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to the incident and investigations are ongoing," a spokesman for the CHP said.

To prevent food-borne 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;
- Ensure food is thoroughly cooked before eating during a hot pot or barbecue meal;
- Handle raw and cooked foods carefully and separate them completely during the cooking process;
- Use two sets of chopsticks and eating utensils to handle raw and cooked food;
- Do not patronise illegal food hawkers;
- Drink boiled water;
- Do not try to use salt, vinegar, wine and wasabi to kill bacteria as they are not effective; and

- Always wash hands before eating and after going to the toilet.