



Y CHOLERA CONTROL



Special attention to food, environmental and personal hygiene can prevent cholera.

(1) Food Hygiene

Purchase of food

- Buy raw materials from reliable sources for food production;
- Don't buy food from unlicensed food premises or illegal hawkers;
- Don't buy exposed food and food which looks, smells or tastes abnormal.

Handling of food and equipment

- All food should be washed thoroughly before cooking;
- Raw and cooked food should be handled with separate utensils (e.g. separate chopping boards for raw and cooked food);
- Keep raw and cooked food separately. Place cooked food in the upper part of the refrigerator so as to prevent it from being contaminated by dripping of raw food;



- Thaw frozen food completely to ensure thorough cooking. Defrost process should be made inside the refrigerator at or below 4°C;
- Keep cleansed crockeries in a dust-and insect-proof cupboard.

Cooking and Storage of food

- Ensure thorough cooking of food and reheating of leftovers before consumption;
- Boil water before drinking;
- All perishable food should be stored at a temperature at or below 4°C or above 60°C;
- Avoid keeping live fish or shellfish in water from unreliable source. Fish tanks should be cleansed at regular intervals. Fish tank water should be filtered and changed frequently. All food business licence holders should keep live fish or shellfish in water of quality not below the standard specified in Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance, Chapter 132.

(2) Environmental Hygiene

- Unhygienic environment attracts rats and insects and leads to contamination of food. Always keep the inside and outside of the premises clean;
- Ensure proper disposal of faecal matter so as to avoid contamination;
- Put refuse in a dustbin with proper lid and clean up regularly.

(3) Personal Hygiene

- Keep hands clean. Wash hands with soap and water after visiting toilet and before eating and handling food;
- Wear clean washable outfit at work;
- In case of gastro-intestinal disturbances like vomiting and diarrhoea, don't handle or cook food.

Hygienic Rules for Processing Shellfish

Most shellfish obtains nutrients by filter feeding method. They are easily infected by *Vibrio cholerae*. People eating contaminated shellfish will contract cholera. When processing seafood like shrimps, lobsters, crabs, oysters, clams, mussels and scallops, the following rules help preventing cholera:

Purchase

- Buy only those shellfish which are fresh, with intact shell and free from abnormal odour;
- Check if the container and water for holding the shellfish are clean;
- Don't patronise illegal hawkers as their source of supply may not be safe.



Washing

- Scrub and rinse the shellfish in clean water;
- Remove the viscera.

Cooking

- Cook thoroughly before consumption;
- Remove the shell before cooking as it impedes heat penetration;
- Ensure thorough cooking of the shellfish until their shells open. Once open, boil for an additional 3-5 minutes. In particular



the Pacific oysters should not be eaten raw and shucked oyster should be cooked in boiling water for not less than three minutes;

- When having hotpot, use separate chopsticks and utensils for handling cooked and raw food.

Public should only buy and consume shellfish that are to be eaten raw (e.g. rock oysters, lobster sashimi, geoduck sashimi)

from reliable and reputable food premises.



CHOLERA is an infection caused by *Vibrio cholerae*. Its incubation period ranges from a few hours to five days. Symptoms can include diarrhoea and vomiting. The rapid onset of severe watery diarrhoea will cause dehydration. If treatment is delayed or inadequate, death may follow very shortly. Cholera is transmitted by eating food or drinking water soiled by patients or carriers.

Enquiry:

For further enquiries and information, please call **Communication Resource Unit of Food and Environmental Hygiene Department** at **2381 6096** or 24-hour hotline **2868 0000**.

