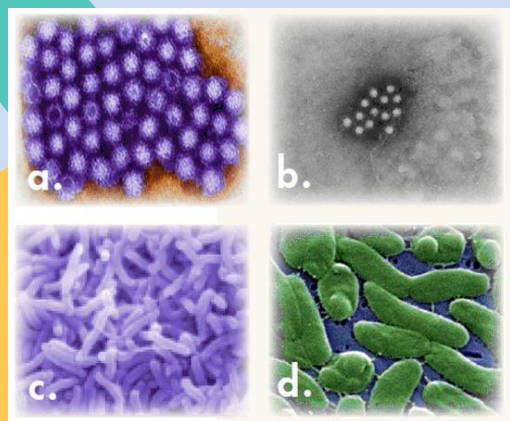


Member Survey Results on Raw Oyster Consumption

In July, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) conducted an online survey to gain an understanding on consumers' food safety awareness of the consumption of raw oysters and their attitudes and practices towards consuming and purchasing raw oysters, and invited members to participate. It was found that most members surveyed were aware of the food safety risks of eating raw oysters, such as different pathogens including bacteria and viruses which might be present in raw oysters and the higher food safety risks associated with pre-shucked raw oysters. More than half of the members surveyed received relevant information on the internet including websites and social media, followed by publications such as newspapers and magazines.

Though members generally understood the risks from eating raw oysters, they could gain a deeper understanding on certain issues. Putting raw oysters in alcohol, mustard, chili sauce and water cannot destroy the pathogens in raw oysters. While observing with the naked eye and judging with the sense of taste, the sense of smell or the sense of touch may help to determine whether raw oysters are fresh, it cannot serve as an effective means to determine whether oysters have been contaminated by pathogens. Consuming a small quantity of contaminated raw oysters can already cause foodborne illnesses. Only [thorough cooking](#) can effectively destroy pathogens.



Pathogens (a. norovirus, b. hepatitis A virus, c. *V. parahaemolyticus*, d. *V. vulnificus*) that may be associated in raw oysters (Photos a and d courtesy of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Photo b courtesy of the U.S. Public Health Image Library; and Photo c courtesy of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

With regard to members' attitudes and preferences towards eating raw oysters, more members chose to eat raw oysters because of their mouthfeel or texture. A second reason was that influenced by family and friends, they believed that raw oysters were nutritious. Yet on food safety concerns, only less than a quarter members interviewed thought that eating raw oysters was of a high risk of foodborne illnesses or food poisoning. Though local food poisoning cases or food incidents associated with eating raw oysters are infrequent, infection with pathogens in raw oysters may cause severe symptoms, hence the risks involved cannot be overlooked.

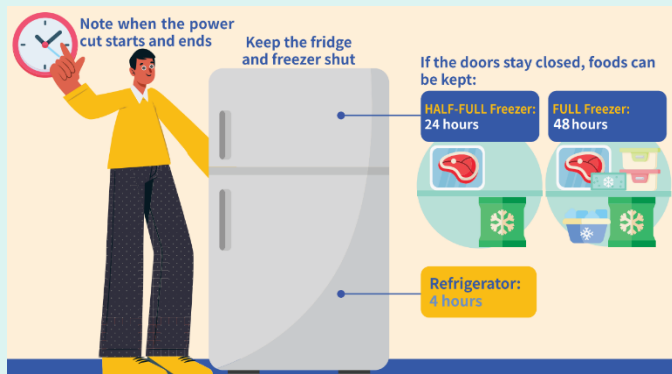


Regarding practices of consuming raw oysters, most members interviewed took into account the reputation of restaurants or shops, apart from paying attention to origin and price. Members generally bought raw oysters from supermarkets, markets or seafood markets, while nearly half of them would choose buffets and self-service when consuming raw oysters in get-together meals. The results showed that respondents had similar choices when purchasing raw oysters or consuming them in eateries.

The CFS would like to thank members for their participation and valuable comments. We will take into account the results of this survey when formulating food safety promotion and risk communication work in the future.

How to Handle Food in Case of Power Cuts or Flooding?

Recently a power outage incident affecting different districts aroused public concern. During the summer and typhoon seasons, Hong Kong often experiences severe and protracted rainstorms, with flooding in some areas. Floodwater can contaminate food, and adverse weather might cause local or widespread power cuts, resulting in spoilage of perishable food due to disruption of refrigeration.



The Centre for Food Safety has published a pamphlet on [How to keep food safe in Case of Power Cut Flooding](#) and explained ways to handle food at different stages of power cuts and flooding. We can make reference to the key points to ensure food safety, which include:

- During power cut, keep the fridge and freezer shut
- After the power resumes, follow the '4 hour/2 hour rule'
- In the time of peace, prepare for emergency
- Before the flood, position food storage areas and refrigerators as far away from floodwater as feasible.
- After floods, clean and disinfect utensils and kitchen equipment, and salvage and dispose of food according to the types of food and packaging

	Less than 2 hours	2-4 hours	More than 4 hours
For refrigeration	✓	✗	✗
For immediate use	✓	✓	✗
Legends : ✓Yes ✗No			Dispose!

You are welcome to refer to and download the pamphlet to strengthen food safety awareness by studying the pamphlet in detail.

Recruitment of the 7th-term Consumer Liaison Group Members

Thank you for your participation in the Consumer Liaison Group (CLG). It requires a joint effort from all stakeholders to ensure food safety. Your friends and family are also welcome to join the 7th-term CLG. Please complete and return the attached membership form. It is also available for download from our website:

https://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/committee/committee_clg_recruitment.html