



## Vegan-Friendly Newport Beach Eatery Shut Down After Customers Fall Ill

September 5, 2014 6:33 PM

**NEWPORT BEACH (CBSLA.com)** — Investigators with the Orange County Health Department were working Friday to determine what may have caused several people to get sick after eating at an upscale Newport Beach restaurant.

KNX 1070's Ron Kilgore reports authorities say six diners came down with the intestinal bacteria shigella after eating at the True Food Kitchen at Fashion Island between Aug. 21-25.

The self-billed healthy living restaurant was shut down on Aug. 28 for two days over what county inspectors labeled an "imminent health risk" due to at least one confirmed case of shigella.

After the closure, True Food reopened after the entire restaurant was sanitized and replacement staff was brought in from the chain's other restaurants in Santa Monica and San Diego, The Orange County Register reported.

As part of the two-day sanitation effort, True Food was also required to trash all ready-to-eat foods and open beverage bottles and containers, according to the Register. Unsealed linens and ice were also required to be disposed of, the Register reported.

A routine inspection conducted June 9 showed a lack of sanitary conditions, including evidence of "vermin activity," improper food storage and inadequate hygiene, according to an OC Health Department report.

In a statement released Friday, Anita Walker, a marketing executive for True Food parent company Fox Restaurant Concepts, said the 14-hour cleaning effort was "designed to ensure the safety of our restaurant and make us ever more vigilant about food safety."

"We were able to react quickly and open again because we plan and practice for contingencies like this because any public setting where people gather can contribute to the spread of illness these days, including us, and our guests and employees health and welfare remain our top priority," stated Walker.

Most people who become infected with shigella develop diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps starting a day or two after they are exposed to the bacteria, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

While an infection rarely requires hospitalization, children less than two years old who contract shigella may develop a high fever with seizures, according to the CDC.

While test results are still pending, OC Public Health Medical Director Matt Zahn said there could be more than one possible cause.

"You look at food potential issues, you look at environment potential issues, you look at the possibility that there is one person or worker there who may be infected who may be passing that bacteria on to food and making people sick," said Zahn.

Any customers of True Food who have concerns or questions were asked to call (844) 570-5555.

SOURCE: <http://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2014/09/05/vegan-friendly-oc-eatery-shut-down-after-customers-fall-ill/>