



The White Swan Public House Foodborne illness outbreak investigation

 **POSTED JULY 13, 2017**

Public Health is investigating an outbreak of gastroenteritis with watery diarrhea, abdominal cramping, and vomiting associated with consumption of raw oysters at White Swan Public House located at 1001 Fairview Ave N, Seattle, WA 98109.

Six people from two separate dinner parties became ill after eating raw oysters at the restaurant on June 30 and July 3, 2017. No laboratory testing was done. Symptoms are suggestive of vibriosis; however without testing we cannot rule out norovirus.

Public Health learned of the outbreak on July 6th. An on-site investigation was conducted at White Swan Public House on 7/6/17 by environmental health inspectors. No factors were identified that contribute to the spread of *Vibrio*, such as insufficient refrigeration temperatures or evidence of cross-contamination. Public Health also reported the illnesses to Washington State Department of Health (DOH) Shellfish Program, which is responsible for tracking the reports and harvest locations of the oysters implicated in these illnesses. The oysters served at the meals were harvested from multiple growing areas/bays in Washington State and New Zealand. Without further information from the ill persons on the variety of oysters consumed, we were unable to pinpoint the particular growing area the oysters came from and no closures or recalls were issued. For more information, see the [DOH Shellfish Program website](#).

About Vibriosis

Vibrio is a bacteria consisting of multiple species, including *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*. The bacteria are naturally occurring in marine waters. Eating undercooked or raw shellfish, especially raw oysters, is the main risk factor for acquiring vibriosis from infection with *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*. Growth of *Vibrio* species is amplified during the warmer months and *Vibrio* levels in shellfish increase during the summer.

To prevent *Vibrio* infection:

1. Because raw seafood can be contaminated with *Vibrio*, always cook shellfish and other seafood thoroughly before eating.
2. Wash cutting boards and counters used for shellfish preparation immediately after use to avoid cross contaminating other foods.
3. Wash hands thoroughly with soap after handling raw shellfish.

4. Stay out of brackish or salt water if you have any wounds (including scrapes and cuts), or cover your wound with waterproof bandage to prevent a skin infection.
5. Wash wounds and cuts with soap and water if they have been exposed to seawater or raw seafood and raw seafood juices, to prevent a skin infection from *Vibrio*.

For more information on vibriosis, see:

1. [Vibrio facts, Public Health – Seattle & King County](#)
2. [Vibrio facts, Foodsafety.gov](#)
3. [Norovirus facts, Public Health – Seattle & King County](#)
4. [Norovirus facts, Foodsafety.gov](#)

Last Updated July 13, 2017