

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM HEALTH CORPORATION



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Update: Botulism Test Presumptively Positive on Seafood Salad

The Alaska Section of Epidemiology has confirmed a case of botulism in an adult patient who ate Native Salad at the Cama-i Dance Festival in Bethel, March 16-18, 2018. The Alaska State Public Health Lab received a sample of the food consumed by the patient and it tested presumptive positive for botulism toxin type E. Confirmatory testing results will be available in coming weeks.

Botulism toxin is produced from a certain bacteria that is found in the environment. When present in a food product, the toxin may not evenly distribute throughout the food. Multiple people can eat from the some container of food and some may become ill while others will not get sick. Toxin production is more likely under certain conditions, like no oxygen or warm temperatures, which could be present during preparation or later during storage of that food.

Symptoms of botulism include a dry mouth, blurred or double vision, difficulty swallowing, drooping eyelids, dilated pupils, voice changes, dizziness, and/or shortness of breath, which typically start 1-3 days after consuming the toxin-containing food. Botulism can be a life-threatening condition if not treated by medical personnel.

Anyone experiencing symptoms in Bethel should visit the emergency room; people with symptoms outside of Bethel should call their clinic.

Throw away any leftover Native Salad you may have purchased at the Cama-i Dance Festival last weekend.

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