

An Outbreak of Acute Gastrointestinal Illness Following Consumption of Hydrogen Peroxide-Contaminated Noodles at School, Taiwan, April 2013

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Abstract

On April 3, 2013, Taiwan Centers for Disease Control was notified of more than 150 students with acute gastrointestinal illness occurring within one hour after consuming lunch served at school. We conducted a case-control study using a semi-structured questionnaire to determine the possible food items associated with the illness, and tested both human and food specimens in our laboratory. The results confirmed the outbreak caused by consumption of hydrogen peroxide contaminated noodles. Improper management of hazardous chemicals at the noodle factory was the plausible mechanism for contamination. Improving the adherence to regulations through education and periodic audits is the key to prevention of such event.

Keywords: Hydrogen peroxide, foodborne disease, noodles

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