

A *Clostridium perfringens* associated Foodborne Outbreak on a Campsite — Northern Taiwan, 2016

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Abstract

On September 25, 2016, 57 college students were reported having acute diarrhea after a gathering event on a campsite in Northern Taiwan. We conducted an investigation to identify the etiology and associated factors. We identified and interviewed event attendees and collected information on foods consumed and symptoms through questionnaire. Of the 115 students interviewed, we identified 56 cases. The median incubation period was 11 hours (range: 7–35 hours). All event attendees ate boxed lunch at noon on September 24. Illness was associated with eating stir-fry vegetable (OR: 2.38; 95% CI: 1.02–5.54) and simmered bean curd (OR: 2.17; 95% CI: 1.03–4.60) at lunch according to the bivariate analysis. *C. perfringens* were isolated from stool specimens of two students, and the isolates were *cpe*-positive. Leftovers were culture negative so testing for *C. perfringens* was not performed. Based on the clinical manifestations, epidemiologic characteristics, and having isolates with same toxin type, we concluded that this outbreak was caused by *C. perfringens*. *C. perfringens* related foodborne disease is mostly self-limiting and resolves within 48 hours, thus frequently neglected. We suggest proper food heating and storage practices in food service establishments.

Keywords: *Clostridium perfringens*, Diarrhea, Foodborne

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