

May 23, 2007

News media calls to David Hass at (630) 682-7979, ext. 7374.

## DuPage County Health Department investigating cluster of *Salmonella* cases

The DuPage County Health Department is investigating a cluster of *Salmonella* cases possibly associated with food purchased from an Asian market and restaurant in the Darien area between April 26 and May 12. Six cases of *Salmonella* serotype Montevideo have been confirmed in residents of DuPage and surrounding counties. Additional lab reports are pending.

The health department has consulted and is working in conjunction with the Infectious Disease Division of the Illinois Department of Public Health to identify additional cases that may be related to this investigation. The food facility possibly associated with the illness cluster has been closed by the health department pending the results of the investigation.

*Salmonella* is a bacterium that can be found in many foods including meats, poultry, dairy products, fresh fruits and vegetables. While the bacterium cannot be detected by sight, taste or smell, it can cause illness, including fever, muscle aches, vomiting, abdominal cramps and diarrhea. Symptoms usually appear six to 72 hours after ingestion. Most individuals can recover on their own in three to five days.

The infection can be more severe in young children, the elderly and those with compromised immune systems. The health department is requesting that consumers contact their physicians for further evaluation and possible *Salmonella* testing if they are currently ill with symptoms such as fever and diarrhea or had been ill with similar symptoms since mid-April.

Additional information will assist the health department in locating the cause of infection. Persons who feel they may have experienced illness after consuming food purchased in DuPage County should contact the health department's Food Safety Program at (630) 682-7400.

Nationally, *Salmonella* sickens approximately four million people a year, with 1,500 to 2,500 cases reported annually in Illinois. Most cases are associated with consumption of contaminated or mishandled food, but outbreaks have also been associated with exposure to animals such as baby chicks and reptiles. Consumers are encouraged to handle food safely and practice good hand washing.

For additional information, please contact the Food Safety Program at (630) 682-7400 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

*"We promote health, prevent illness, and provide quality service"*