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Health Department Investigating Food-Borne Illness Following Mother's Day Brunch

The Halton Region Health Department is currently investigating cases of food-borne illness among individuals who attended a Mother's Day buffet brunch, Sunday, May 8, at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington, Ontario.

"Preliminary test results indicate presumptive salmonella bacterium as the cause of the illness," said Dr. Bob Nosal, Medical Officer of Health for Halton Region. "Although we have reached many of those who attended the May 8th brunch, we are notifying the public to reach those we have not been able to contact. There exists a risk of passing the infection to others if these individuals work, while ill, in food preparation, food service, child care, or health care settings. We wish to prevent secondary infections."

The infection caused by salmonella, called salmonellosis, may cause severe diarrhea, vomiting, fever, nausea, headache, and abdominal pain usually 12 to 36 hours after exposure. In most people, the illness lasts between 4 to 7 days and does not require specific treatment unless the person becomes severely dehydrated or the infection spreads from the intestines to the blood. The elderly, infants, and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to have severe illness.

The Health Department has conducted an inspection at the location and is working with the caterer at the establishment to review their food handling practices and to ensure that appropriate precautions are followed when food is handled. Illness has only been associated, at this time, with the May 8th meal.

The Health Department has notified local physicians, hospital emergency rooms, and walk-in clinics, as well as other Health Departments about this outbreak.

If you attended the Mother's Day Brunch at the Royal Botanical Gardens on May 8th and the Health Department has not yet been able to reach you, please contact the Halton Region Health Department at 905-825-6000, TTY 905-827-9833, Toll free 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866).

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http://www.region.halton.on.ca/health/media_release/incShowMedia.cfm?MediaID=2005-05-14-11-05-25