

Halton Region Health Department

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Update regarding salmonella outbreak in Burlington, Ontario

Further to information released May 14, 2005 regarding an investigation of food borne illness resulting from food served at a Mother's Day buffet brunch at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington, Ontario, the Halton Region Health Department has confirmed that of the 181 people contacted to date, 77 individuals became ill after the meal. Approximately three hundred people attended the buffet. Of the 77 who are ill, 3 have been hospitalized. The presumptive cause of illness at this time is salmonella. At this time the only reports of illness are associated with the May 8th buffet.

The gardens are located in Burlington, Ontario, however, individuals who attended this buffet live throughout southern Ontario, including the Greater Toronto Area, Niagara Peninsula, Waterloo and London. "Although all food items were discarded immediately after the buffet on May 8th, some prepared and stock items used in the buffet preparation were served at the Royal Botanical Gardens in the days before and 3 days after the Mother's Day event" said Dr. Bob Nosal, Medical Officer of Health for Halton Region. "The Health Department is therefore interested in hearing from anyone who ate at the Royal Botanical Gardens from May 1st to May 12th and has been ill with diarrhea, vomiting and fever", added Dr. Nosal. 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.

The Halton Region Health Department is continuing with its investigation and has taken measures to ensure the food handling practices of the caterer meet food safety standards.

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 or other organs. The elderly, infants, and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to have severe illness.

If you attended the Mother's Day buffet brunch at the Royal Botanical Gardens on May 8th and the Health Department has not yet been able to reach you or if you ate at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington at any other time between May 1 and May 12 and you were ill with diarrhea, vomiting and fever, please contact the Halton Region Health Department at 905-825-6000, TTY 905-827-9833, Toll free 1-866-4HALTON (1866-442-5866).

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http://www.region.halton.on.ca/health/media_release/incShowMedia.cfm?MediaID=2005-05-15-15-05-30