

Neurotoxic Shellfish Poisoning

Merlin reporting code = 98800
Case report form (CRF): N/A
NO CRF REQUIRED

Clinical description

Onset is within a few minutes to a few hours after consumption of epidemiologically implicated shellfish (typically clams, mussels, oysters, whelks and certain gastropods). Symptoms include tingling and numbness of lips, mouth, fingers, and toes; muscular aches; ataxia, and dizziness and usually accompanied by diarrhea, vomiting and/or nausea. Symptoms sometimes include reversal of hot and cold sensations; pupil dilation; and respiratory distress. Illness is self-limited and generally milder than paralytic shellfish poisoning; some patients have required ICU support for respiratory distress. Duration is from a few hours to a few days.

Laboratory criteria for case classification

Detection of toxin (brevetoxin) in epidemiologically implicated shellfish.

Case classification

Confirmed: Clinically compatible illness in a person that consumed shellfish with a positive laboratory finding (brevetoxin) or consumed shellfish from areas where other toxic shellfish have been found or where red tide is documented (DACS shellfish beds closed in region).

Comments

Contact your [Regional Environmental Epidemiologist](#) for information.

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