

# Environmental health checklist when responding to Scombrototoxin (aka "Scombroid") Poisoning

## General Follow-up

- Assess recent employee illness. Individual employee interviews are typically not needed.
  - a. Do employees eat the food item in question and have they experienced symptoms consistent with scombrototoxin poisoning, such as tingling/burning sensations around the mouth, facial flushing, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, or rash?
- Provide Scombroid factsheet to management:  
[Scombroid Fish Poisoning \(PDF\)](#)

## Customer and Menu Information

- Ask management if they have received any customer illness complaints.
  - a. If they have, and the complaints were not reported to EH, inform them that this is a violation of the food code and that all future complaints need to be reported.
- Obtain a restaurant menu (if different from online menu), and identify which items included the suspect food item, provide menu and list to Epi.
- Ask restaurant management to determine how many of the suspect food item were sold on the date(s) in question (e.g., How many orders with tuna?)
- Collect records to contact additional patrons from the date(s) in question, and provide them to the lead Epi. If possible, collect itemized receipts or take-out orders specific to those who ate the suspect food item. If you can't obtain itemized receipts, Epi may request other patron info, such as:
  - a. Credit card receipts with names
  - b. Reservation lists
  - c. Online reservation lists (ex: Open Table)
  - d. Takeout/carry out orders
  - e. Loyalty programs
- Ask if the establishment had any specials on the date(s) in question.

## Suspect Food Information

- Gather invoices for the suspect food item and identify which shipment would have been served on the meal date in question.
- Do they have any remaining product from the same lot/shipment leftover?
  - a. Embargo any remaining suspect food items from the meal date if available (this could be prepped or not prepped items).

- b. Notify Epi and discuss if sampling would be appropriate. If yes, Epi can help coordinate the collection of food samples by MDA.
- After appropriate sampling has occurred, or if Epi determines sampling would not be appropriate, ensure the remaining food in question is completely discarded.

## Environmental Assessment

- Conduct a food flow of the suspect food item from receiving to service.
  - a. How long is the product at room temperature for thawing, prep, service, etc.?
  - b. How is prepped product cooled?
- Any cold-holding violations or opportunity for suspect food item to be out of temperature control?
- Is cold-holding equipment working properly?
- Determine if the establishment maintains temperature logs and review, if available.
  - a. Are there any records to indicate if the suspect food item came into the facility at proper cold-holding temperatures?
- Ask if there have been any recent changes to the menu, food suppliers, or other unique events that occurred policy or practice-wise?
- Note violations and provide appropriate corrective actions.
  - a. Remind management and food workers of the importance of properly refrigerating fish at all times from receiving to service.