



Good evening,

We wanted to make you aware of a situation we are closely monitoring ahead of the weekend.

This morning, the Galveston County Health District issued a public health alert regarding a potential pattern in cases related to Vibrio bacteria, a group of bacteria commonly found in marine environments. So far, it has gained minimal online and media traction.

Here is what we know:

- There has been an increase in Vibrio cases this year that can be traced back to Galveston, and recent reports of Vibrio infections have raised concerns about exposure.
- The majority of reported cases involve severe wound infections from *Vibrio vulnificus*, with a few gastrointestinal illnesses from *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* and cholera-related illnesses from *Vibrio cholera*.
- This is an evolving situation, but right now, the alert is precautionary and warns against the potential of Vibrio based on an increase in related cases. The bacteria have the ability to be most present during summer months with warmer water temperatures.

The Galveston County Health District is recommending the following precautions:

1. **Avoid Raw or Undercooked Seafood:** Ensure seafood is cooked thoroughly before consumption. Avoid eating raw shellfish, especially from areas with reported Vibrio outbreaks.
2. **Practice Good Hygiene:** Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water, particularly after handling raw seafood.
3. **Protect Wounds:** Keep any cuts or open wounds covered and avoid exposure to seawater if you have an open wound.
4. **Stay Informed:** Pay attention to local health advisories regarding water quality and seafood safety.

Talking Points related to Vibrio:

- Vibrio bacteria are naturally present in warm salt and brackish water. People who've been in beach water anywhere have likely been exposed to Vibrio bacteria and likely did not have a

negative reaction.

- Consuming raw shellfish is the most common way people get Vibrio infection; avoid fresh shellfish when there is an alert or increase in cases.
- Contracting Vibrio is rare and most commonly impacts people with pre-existing immune system conditions or open wounds.
- People with diabetes, liver disease, cancer, or other immune-suppressing conditions who swim in untreated water with open cuts or sores are at an increased risk for Vibrio vulnificus.
- People who are considered medically healthy are extraordinarily less likely to get an infection than the ill.
- To learn more about vibrio, go to www.cdc.gov/vibrio

Our team will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates from the Galveston County Health District as they become available. We appreciate everything you do for our Island and its visitors and are committed to ensuring we have a successful and safe rest of summer.

Best regards,

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