



BC Centre for Disease Control
An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

Notice to Restaurants and Retail Establishments Selling or Serving Oysters in BC

Date posted: March 18, 2022

We are receiving reports of norovirus illness associated with the consumption of raw and lightly cooked oysters. Norovirus causes vomiting and diarrhea. We are still in the process of investigating these illnesses.

At this time, raw oysters may continue to be purchased, sold and served at restaurant and retail establishments in BC.

Please follow these recommendations to limit the risk of illness and to help with the investigation.

1. Inform customers about risk of consuming raw oysters so they can make an informed decision. Please refer customers to the required menu warning and advise customers they can lower their risk of illness by consuming cooked oysters.
2. Inform customers what varieties of raw oysters you are selling or serving to them. This will help them remember what they ate.
3. Track what oysters varieties are served on sampling plates, during happy hours and buck a shuck events.
4. Use the shellfish receiving log to record all incoming shipments of oysters and record the shellfish tag supplier and lot number. Store shellfish tags by date served and bundle with date label. This will help Environmental Health Officers retrieve the information needed in the event of an investigation.
5. When preparing cooked oysters, cook oysters to an internal temperature of 90°C (194°F) for a minimum of 90 seconds.
6. If you receive a report of illness associated with consumption of oysters from a customer, refer them to their local public health office (health authority).

Further guidelines for restaurants and retail about raw oysters are available on this site under the 'Fish and Shellfish' accordion. Guidance includes a food safety plan for service of raw oysters and a shellfish receiving log: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/food-your-health/fish-shellfish>

Affected harvest areas are being closed and will reopen when contamination is cleared (consult the [Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program for norovirus contamination](#) for further information about this process).

