

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

### General Follow-up

* Assess recent employee illness. Individual employee interviews are typically not needed.
  1. Do employees eat the food item in question and have they experienced symptoms consistent with scombrotoxin 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)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/scombroid/scombroid.pdf)

### Customer and Menu Information

* Ask management if they have received any customer illness complaints.
  1. 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:
  1. Credit card receipts with names
  2. Reservation lists
  3. Online reservation lists (ex: Open Table)
  4. Takeout/carry out orders
  5. 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?
  1. Embargo any remaining suspect food items from the meal date if available (this could be prepped or not prepped items).
  2. 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.
  1. How long is the product at room temperature for thawing, prep, service, etc.?
  2. 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.
  1. 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.
  1. Remind management and food workers of the importance of properly refrigerating fish at all times from receiving to service.