

Hepatitis A Alert – Radiance of the Seas Cruise Ship

8 March 2013

A food handler on the Radiance of the Seas cruise to the South Pacific which ended in Sydney on 15 February 2013 has been diagnosed with hepatitis A.

The Public Health Unit has warned passengers who ate salads or food not cooked after preparation during 4 to 8 February 2013, to look out for symptoms of hepatitis A, although the risk of infection is considered to be very low.

Passengers have been contacted in writing to advise them of their possible exposure to hepatitis A infection and the symptoms to look out for.

The NSW Food Authority has inspected the cruise ship and has advised that food hygiene standards are very high.

Hepatitis A is a viral infection of the liver. Symptoms include feeling unwell, aches and pains, fever, nausea, lack of appetite, abdominal discomfort and darkening of the urine, followed in a few days by jaundice (yellowing of the eyeballs and skin). Not all people will develop symptoms if they are infected.

People should always wash their hands thoroughly with soap and running water for at least 10 seconds and dry them with a clean paper towel: after going to the toilet; before eating; and before preparing food or drink.

Those who have had hepatitis A, or have received the full course of vaccinations against it (two injections), would not be considered at risk.

A NSW Health Information Line is available on 1800 301 022.

A fact sheet about hepatitis A can be downloaded from the NSW Health website at:
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/infectious/hepatitisa.html> .