

October 3, 2018

Third case of Vibrio confirmed in Mobile County

MOBILE, Alabama — The third case of Vibrio in 2018 has been reported to the Mobile County Health Department (MCHD). The case is currently under investigation by MCHD’s Infectious Diseases & Outbreak division.

Exposure took place while cleaning crabs in the coastal waters of Mobile Bay. The species has been identified as *Vibrio vulnificus*. Necrotizing fasciitis — an infection that results in the death of the body’s soft tissue — was present in this case. Because of patient privacy rights under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), no additional identifying information will be made available to the public.

Vibrio bacteria naturally live in certain coastal waters and are present in higher concentrations between May and October when water temperatures are warmer. However, the bacteria can be present throughout the year in some areas. While Vibrio bacteria can enter the body through a break in the skin, it can also come from consuming contaminated seafood.

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) has issued a news release titled “Do not enter bodies of water if you have cuts or abrasions; if injured, clean wound at once to reduce risk of infection.” Here is the link: <http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/news/2018/06/15.html/>

Of the more than 70 species of Vibrio that exist, about a dozen can cause human illness — known as Vibriosis. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that each year in the United States 80,000 individuals become sick with Vibriosis, and 100 people die from their infection. About 52,000 of these illnesses are estimated to be the result of eating contaminated food.

As of September 22, ADPH reports there have been 25 cases of Vibriosis (non-Cholera) reviewed and verified statewide. During 2017, there were seven cases of Vibriosis reported to MCHD.