



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CDPH Lifts Warning for Rock Crabs, Bivalve Shellfish Caught along Central Coast**

SACRAMENTO – The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has lifted the health advisory for rock crabs and bivalve shellfish caught in Monterey Bay and portions of Half Moon Bay. The advisory was lifted due to recent tests showing that traces of domoic acid have declined to low or undetectable levels in rock crabs and bivalve shellfish caught in the area.

[The advisory issued on August 19, 2016](#) was for rock crabs and bivalve shellfish caught in state waters south of Latitude 37° 11' N. (near Pigeon Point) and north of Latitude 36° 35' N (near Cypress Point in Monterey County).

**The advisory and fishery closure remains in effect for rock crabs caught in state waters north of Latitude 37° 11' N. (near Pigeon Point).**

While CDPH believes rock crab caught from areas south of Pigeon Point are safe to consume, the Department recommends that **consumers not eat the viscera (internal organs, also known as “butter” or “guts”) of crabs**. The viscera usually contain much higher levels of domoic acid than crab body meat. When whole crabs are cooked in liquid, domoic acid may leach from the viscera into the cooking liquid. Water or broth used to cook whole crabs should be discarded and not used to prepare dishes such as sauces, broths, soups or stews (for example, cioppino or gumbo), stocks, roux, dressings or dips.

The best ways to reduce risk are to:

- Remove the crab viscera and rinse out the body cavity prior to cooking, or
- Boil or steam whole crabs, instead of frying or broiling, and discard cooking liquids.

Symptoms of domoic acid poisoning can occur within 30 minutes to 24 hours after eating toxic seafood. In mild cases, symptoms may include vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, headache and dizziness. These symptoms disappear within several days. In severe cases, the victim may experience trouble breathing, confusion, disorientation, cardiovascular instability, seizures, excessive bronchial secretions, permanent loss of short term memory (a condition known as Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning), coma or death. There have been no reported illnesses associated with this event.

[The annual quarantine on sport-harvested mussels](#) gathered along the California coast, which began May 1, 2016 remains in effect.

For updated information about shellfish poisoning and quarantines, call CDPH’s toll-free Shellfish Information Line at (800) 553-4133. For additional information, visit CDPH’s [Natural Marine Toxins: PSP and Domoic Acid Web page](#) and CDPH’s [Domoic Acid health information Web page](#).