



**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
DEPARTMENT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH**

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Dear Provider,

This alert is to warn you about possible foodborne intoxication following consumption of Buffalo Fish. Three individuals in Illinois consumed Buffalo Fish harvested in Kentucky and are now hospitalized and in critical condition due to Haff Disease. Haff Disease is caused by a toxin occasionally found in certain types of fish, one of which is Buffalo Fish. This toxin is heat-stable, persists in the fish even after cooking and is not detectable by color, odor or other means.

The toxin causes rhabdomyolysis within 24 hours of consuming the fish. The result is muscle pain and stiffness, weakness, and low and discolored urine output due to kidney damage. Other symptoms may also occur such as vomiting and diarrhea. Some reports say symptoms can mimic cardiac pain.

Although this toxicity is rare, please be on the alert for it. This family consumed fish from either the Ohio River or Lake Barkley in Kentucky. Please be aware of this diagnosis in patients that present with rhabdomyolysis and ask about fish consumption in the past 24 hours. Contact your local health department if you believe this may be the cause.

If you have any questions, please contact: Carrell Rush at 502-564-3261 x4240

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