**Shellfish Interviewing Tips**

When interviewing a potential shellfish-associated illness case, it is of utmost importance to try to pinpoint which shellfish the case consumed so that the appropriate shellfish tags can be collected. Note: Oysters are mentioned throughout this document, but other shellfish can be substituted where the word “oyster” is used.

For oysters purchased at a restaurant:

* What time did the patient eat?
* From which menu (e.g., lunch, dinner, bar, happy hour) did they order?
	+ *Tip: While interviewing the case, look up the restaurant on the Internet during the interview and review the menu.*
* Did they order off a special oyster list (usually printed out daily by the restaurant), or did they order off the “regular” menu?
* Did they order a specific type of oyster and do they remember the type? Note: If they can’t remember the type of oyster it can be helpful to ask about the size and shape (deep versus shallow).
* Did the waiter tell them anything about where the oyster was harvested or its flavor profile?
* Can they recall the name of the menu item? For example, did they order a “sampler”, “chef’s special” or “seafood tower”?
* How many different types of oysters did they eat?
* How *many* oysters did they eat?
	+ *Tip: This is an important question that is sometimes overlooked; please ensure this information is captured.*
* How were the oysters prepared? (raw, steamed, grilled, baked, etc.)
* If served raw, were the oysters served on the half shell or were they served in a shot glass (sometimes called “oyster shooters”)?
* Do they still have the receipt?
	+ *Tip: Some restaurants print the name of the oysters ordered onto the receipt because they are individually priced. If the case can’t find the receipt and this is a restaurant that individually prices oysters, consider asking the patient’s permission to ask the restaurant to look up the order by the name and last 4 digits on the credit card receipt.*

For oysters purchased at a shellfish stand or grocery store:

* What day and time did they purchase the oysters?
* What day and time did they eat them?
* How did they store the oysters (i.e., how did they keep them cold?) between purchase and consumption?
* Do they have the receipt? If so, it may list the type of oysters. If not, did they use a grocery store “shopper card” when they purchased them?
* Were oysters purchased:
	+ In the shell?
	+ Already shucked in a jar? If so, ask the case to identify the size of the jar. Traceback information should be included on the lid--ask if they still have the lid or can retrieve it from the garbage.