



HEALTH ADVISORY

Freshwater Crab (a.k.a. Sawagani Crab, Japanese River Crab, or Regal Crab)

Recent cases of an unusual lung infection caused by a parasitic lung fluke (*Paragonimus* sp.) found in raw imported freshwater crabs were identified in Orange County.

Lung fluke infection is not transmitted from person to person. Human infection occurs by eating inadequately cooked crab that harbor the parasite.

The acute phase (invasion and migration) may be marked by diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever, cough, hives, an enlargement of the liver and spleen, pulmonary abnormalities and an elevated level of eosinophils (a type of white blood cell). During the chronic phase, pulmonary manifestations include cough, expectoration of discolored sputum, spitting of blood, and chest radiographic abnormalities. (CDC)

Sawagani crabs have a shell that is about three-quarters of an inch across, or about the size of the first joint on a person's thumb. Including the legs, the crabs are more than 2 inches in size.

Current information indicates that these crabs may have been distributed to restaurants in 16 California counties. As a precaution and to provide public awareness, Environmental Health is providing this health advisory:

1. If sold, the product should be cooked thoroughly to a temperature of at least 145°F.
2. Avoid selling or serving raw or uncooked fresh water crabs.

For general information, contact the Food and Milk Program at (626) 430-5400, or for any suspected cases please contact the Acute Communicable Disease Control Unit at (213) 240-7941.

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