



**Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency**  
*Healthy People, Healthy Communities*  
**Anne Molgaard, Acting Director**



## **Press Release**

*Not for op-ed*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **News Release**

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

### **CDPH Lifts Rock Crab Health Advisory in Mendocino County**

SACRAMENTO –The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has lifted the health advisory for rock crab caught in state waters in all areas south of the Mendocino/Humboldt County line (Latitude 40° 00.00' N). CDPH lifted this advisory today due to recent tests showing that domoic acid has declined to low or undetectable levels in rock crab caught in the area, indicating that they are safe to consume. There have been no reported illnesses associated with this event.

This partial lifting comes after the March 30, 2018 advisory lifting the advisory for rock crab caught in state waters south of Latitude 38° 46.1' N (near Gualala). The advisory remains in effect for rock crab caught in state waters north of the Mendocino/Humboldt County Line (Latitude 40° 00.00' N).

As a precaution, consumers are advised not to eat the viscera (internal organs, also known as "guts" that may contain fat or "butter") of crab. The viscera usually contain much higher levels of domoic acid than crab body meat. When whole crab are cooked in liquid, domoic acid may leach from the viscera into the cooking liquid. Water or broth used to cook whole crab 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.

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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 crab, instead of frying or broiling, and discard the viscera and 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, coma or death.

Domoic acid accumulation in seafood is a natural occurrence that is related to a "bloom" of a particular single-celled plant. The conditions that support the growth of this plant are complex and not predictable. CDPH will continue to coordinate its efforts with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the fishing community to collect rock crab samples from the northern California coast.

You can get the most current information on shellfish advisories and quarantines by calling CDPH's toll-free Shellfish Information Line at (800) 553-4133. For additional information, please visit the CDPH [Marine Biotoxin Monitoring Web page](#) or the [CDPH Domoic Acid Web page](#).

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