

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



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Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN BAY COUNTY:
PREVENTING VIBRIO VULNIFICUS**

Bay County –The Florida Department of Health in Bay County encourages individuals to remain aware of the slight risk of a bacterial infection, *Vibrio Vulnificus* (VV), which is present in warm coastal waters throughout the world during the hottest times of the year.

People with liver disease, diabetes, or weakened immune systems are at particular risk of catching VV, by eating raw or undercooked shellfish, or swimming in warm salt or brackish water with open sores. With VV illness usually begins within one to three days of exposure, but up to a week later for a small percentage of cases. Symptoms include fever, swelling and redness of skin on arms or legs, with blood-tinged blisters, low blood pressure and shock. Most cases can be treated with antibiotics.

There have been no VV infections so far this year in Bay County.

The best way to avoid *Vibrio Vulnificus* is with prevention:

- Avoid eating raw oysters or other raw shellfish
- Cook shellfish thoroughly
- Avoid cross-contamination of cooked seafood and other foods with raw seafood and juices from raw seafood
- Avoid exposure of open wounds or broken skin to warm salt or brackish water, or to raw shellfish harvested from such waters
- Wear protective clothing (e.g., gloves) when handling raw shellfish

For more information, please visit the Florida Department of Health's online newsroom at <http://newsroom.doh.state.fl.us/2014/07/25/information-on-vibrio-vulnificus/>. Click on the "subscribe" link on the vibrio page (right below logo / upper right) for updated information, fact sheets and frequently asked questions. Please note the page is currently updated every Friday.

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Florida Department of Health

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