



# MARYLAND Department of Health

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

## Office of Communications

Brittany Fowler · 410-767-1368

Nikki Laska · 410-767-3536

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## State Urges Marylanders Not To Consume Fresh Crab Meat Imported From Venezuela

### *Maryland Department of Health Investigating Contamination*

**Baltimore, MD** (July 6, 2018)—The Maryland Department of Health is warning consumers to avoid eating fresh crab meat imported from Venezuela because of potential risk of infection.

The Department is investigating a cluster of *Vibrio* infections in individuals who reported eating “fresh” (non-pasteurized) crab meat—from a plastic tub—with a label indicating that it is imported from Venezuela. The imported crab meat is sold under different brand names. Maryland crab product has not been associated with this cluster.

The implicated foods have been prepared in both household and restaurant settings, and include a variety of dishes, such as crab cakes, seafood salad containing crab, and crab benedict.

Symptoms of *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* infection include watery diarrhea, abdominal cramping, nausea, vomiting, fever, and chills. At least 9 cases who consumed imported crab meat have been confirmed in the state of Maryland. Two of the individuals were hospitalized and there have been no deaths.

*Vibrio* infections can be caused by ingestion of *Vibrio*-containing water or shellfish and by direct skin exposure to *Vibrio*-containing salt or brackish water, including waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. However, none of the individuals have reported contact with water as a likely cause of illness.

Individuals who have recently consumed imported crab meat from Venezuela and are experiencing any of the symptoms listed above should consult their primary care provider.

The Department continues to investigate this cluster and will provide updates as warranted. Consumers should refrain from eating these non-pasteurized imported products until further notice.

###

*Marylanders who need help finding substance use disorder treatment resources should visit <http://goo.gl/nlfGm0> or call Maryland Crisis Connect, which provides 24/7 support, at 211, press 1. For information on many of the policies currently implemented to fight addiction and overdose in Maryland, see <http://goo.gl/KvEzQw>. If you know of someone in need of treatment for a substance use disorder, treatment facilities can be located by location and program characteristics on our page at <http://goo.gl/rbGF6S>.*

*The Maryland Department of Health is the State agency that protects Maryland's public health. We work together to promote and improve the health and safety of all Marylanders through disease prevention, access to care, quality management, and community engagement. Stay connected: <http://www.twitter.com/MDHealthDept> and <http://www.facebook.com/MarylandDHMH>.*