

Outbreak at an outdoor camp: Unveiling the *Salmonella paratyphi* B cluster in Batu Kurau, Perak

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The Crisis Preparedness and Response Centre (CPRC) of the Larut Matang and Selama District Health Office received a notification of food poisoning cases on November 18, 2023, involving six people from a high school in Bagan Serai who attended a course at a training centre in Batu Kurau, Perak. Investigation and active case detection were conducted, revealing the involvement of 49 symptomatic individuals out of 122 attendees. **Objective:** To identify the risk factors and causes of the *Salmonella Paratyphi* B outbreak at the MRCTV training centre in Batu Kurau. **Materials and Method:** A case-control study was conducted. Cases were defined as individuals who ate at MRCTV and developed symptoms on or after November 17, 2023. Controls were individuals who ate at MRCTV but did not develop symptoms. Data collection involved face-to-face interviews using standardized forms, environmental sampling, and clinical sample analysis. HACCP principles were applied to assess food handling practices. **Results:** The attack rate was 40.16%, with 49 symptomatic cases (41 students and 8 teachers). Symptoms included stomach-ache, diarrhea, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, and fever. The suspected source was chicken cooked in soy sauce provided by an outside caterer. Laboratory tests confirmed *Salmonella paratyphi* B in 8 out of 11 clinical samples. Non-compliance in food storage and preparation, as well as poor hygiene practices, were identified as contributing factors. **Conclusion:** The outbreak was linked to food provided by an outside caterer, with chicken cooked in soy sauce being the suspected source. Control measures included closing the restaurant, providing health education, and improving water management at the training centre to prevent future outbreaks.