

Vibrio vulnificus

- Common in the marine environment
- Illness cases and deaths reported have been associated with consumption of raw Gulf of Mexico harvested oysters since 1978
- Causes wound infections, gastroenteritis, or primary septicemia
- The primary septicemia form of the disease follows consumption of raw seafood containing the organism by individuals with underlying chronic disease, particularly liver disease
- Mortality rate of primary septicemia cases is around 50%

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- In 2001 the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference passed an issue that requires the four Gulf of Mexico states (FL, AL, LA, TX) (source states having 2 or more confirmed cases) to have a *Vibrio vulnificus* Risk Management Plan.
- The Plan shall include, at a minimum, the ISSC Consumer Education Program targeted toward individuals who consume raw oysters and whose health condition(s) increase their risk for *Vibrio vulnificus* illnesses.

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- The goal of the *Vibrio vulnificus* Management Plan will be to reduce the **rate** of etiologically confirmed shellfish-borne *Vibrio vulnificus* septicemia illnesses reported collectively by California, Florida, Louisiana, Texas, from the consumption of commercially harvested raw or undercooked oysters by 40 percent, for years 2005 and 2006 (.182) and by 60 percent for years 2007 and 2008 (.121) from the average illness rate for the years 1995 - 1999 of 0.303/million.

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- The Illness Rate reported thus far for 2002 calendar year is .179 but this remains a preliminary figure as more data are being evaluated.
 - 2001 illness rate: .391
 - 2000 illness rate: .291
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- Average illnesses per year usually around 36 with 18 deaths

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- In 2001, a survey of consumers was completed. Results of the survey and the report are still being analyzed.
- There are two objectives of the Vv education effort:
 - (1) Show 40% increase in awareness of risk from Vv (50% surveyed knew); and
 - (2) Show 15% increase on at-risk consumers no longer eating raw oysters while minimizing impacts to non-at-risk consumer raw oyster consumption (47% are eating less now)
- The survey will be conducted again next year to determine if the objectives are being met.

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- Vv Education programs are being supported by the Gulf of Mexico Program through both the ISSC efforts and state projects.