

Ciguatera

Fish Poisoning

A food borne illness caused by eating certain reef fish whose flesh is contaminated with ciguatera toxin.



Local Name: Ogo
Common Name: Great barracuda
Scientific Name: *Sphyræna barracuda*



Local Name: Ogo buidromo
Common Name: Pick Handle Barracuda
Scientific Name: *Sphyræna jello*



Local Name: Delabulewa
Common Name: Brown-Marbled Grouper
Scientific Name: *Epinephelus fuscoguttatus*



Local Name: Drekeni Levu
Common Name: Giant sweet lips
Scientific Name: *Plectrohinchus albivittatus*



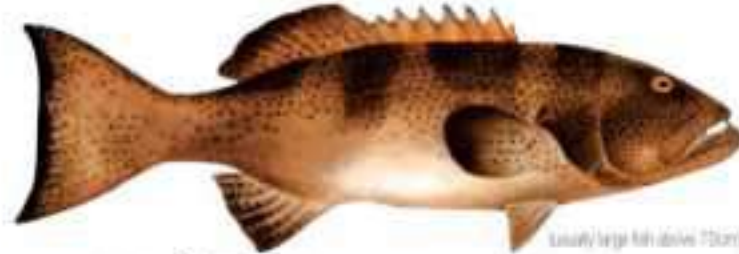
Local Name: Donu
Common Name: Leopard coral grouper
Scientific Name: *Plectropomus leopardus*



Local Name: Donu Sedravu / Batisai
Common Name: Squaretail coral grouper
Scientific Name: *Plectropomus areolatus*



Local Name: Damu ni veitiri
Common Name: Mangrove red snapper (Mangrove Jack)
Scientific Name: *Lutjanus argentimaculatus*



Local Name: Donu Sakoa
Common Name: Blacksaddle coral grouper
Scientific Name: *Plectropomus laevis*



Local Name: Dokonivudi
Common Name: Long-face emperor
Scientific Name: *Lethrinus olivaceus*



Local Name: Utouto
Common Name: Green Jobfish
Scientific Name: *Aprion virescens*



Local Name: Kake Sailoa
Common Name: Black banded snapper
Scientific Name: *Lutjanus semicinctus*



Local Name: Bati
Common Name: Two Spot Red Snapper
Scientific Name: *Lutjanus bohar*



Local Name: Regurawa
Common Name: Rivulatus snapper
Scientific Name: *Lutjanus rivulatus*



Local Name: Kake Sedamu
Common Name: Russell's snapper
Scientific Name: *Lutjanus russelli*



Local Name: Tina ni Kake
Common Name: Long Spot Snapper / Dory
Scientific Name: *Lutjanus fulviflamma*



Local Name: Daniva
Common Name: Gold spot herring
Scientific Name: *Herklotsichthys quadrimaculatus*



Local Name: Sumusumu Sevula
Common Name: White spotted pufferfish
Scientific Name: *Arothron hispidus*



Local Name: Sumusumu Sailo
Common Name: Starry Pufferfish
Scientific Name: *Arothron stellatus*



Local Name: Dabea levu
Common Name: Giant Moray eel
Scientific Name: *Gymnothorax javanicus*



Local Name: Dabea
Common Name: Yellow margin moray
Scientific Name: *Gymnothorax flavimarginatus*

How do people get ciguatera fish poisoning

Ciguatera is a toxin produced by marine micro-algae specifically a dinoflagellate, called *Gambierdiscus toxicus*. Tropical marine fish accumulate this toxin through their diet by eating algae or smaller fish. When humans eat contaminated fish, they develop a condition called ciguatera fish poisoning.

Symptoms

Ciguatera poisoning usually starts 2-24 hours after eating fish with this toxin.

The most common signs are:

- Numbness in fingers, toes, lips, mouth and throat.
- Burning sensation on contact with cold water.
- Joint and muscle pain.
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and headache.

Treatment

- Seek medical attention at the on-set of the symptoms. There is no define treatment for Ciguatera in Fiji, however doctors can prescribe medications to relief discomfort and pain.
- People recovering from fish poisoning should avoid eating reef fish for at least 6 months.

Minimizing the risk

1. Ciguatera toxin fish can not be destroyed by freezing , cooking or any other process.
2. Ciguatera toxin fish can not be detected by appearance, odor, texture or taste.
3. Avoid eating head, liver or other viscera (eg intestine) of the fish as toxin is concentrated in these parts.
4. Avoid eating large fish. (Limit whole weight to around 3kg per fish).

Outbreak Areas

Ciguatera poisoning mostly occurs in areas which has:

1. Rapid increase in algae in the water system.
2. Recent habitat degradation through developments, natural disasters such as cyclones and tsunamis, phase shift.
3. Nutrient enrichment through land run-off.
4. High oil spills (near jetties).

For more information contact



MINISTRY OF FISHERIES