

# Ciguatera poisoning

[Fact sheet](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/foodsafety/documents/fs-37-sea-toxin.pdf) [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/foodsafety/documents/fs-37-sea-toxin.pdf] - Food safety, Queensland Government.

Ciguatera poisoning is a form of food poisoning. It is caused by eating warm water ocean finfish that carry ciguatera poison (a toxin). This poison is produced by a very tiny organism called a dinoflagellate, which attaches itself to algae growing in warm ocean water reef areas. Small plant-eating fish eat this toxic algae and in turn are eaten by larger predatory fish which are eaten by humans.

## Public health management guidelines

The Queensland Health guidelines for this condition are currently under review. Clinicians should contact their [local public health unit](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact/public-health-units/default.asp) [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact/public-health-units/default.asp] for public health advice if they require it.

## Notification

### Notification resources

- List of all [Pathological, clinical and provisional diagnosis notifiable conditions](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notifiable-conditions/list/default.asp) [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notifiable-conditions/list/default.asp]
- List of [Public Health Unit](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact/public-health-units/default.asp) [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact/public-health-units/default.asp] contacts
- [Notifiable conditions report form for Queensland clinicians](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notif-conditions-rpt.pdf) [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notif-conditions-rpt.pdf] ([PHA S70](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/notif_conditions_rpt.pdf) [http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/notif\_conditions\_rpt.pdf]) (PDF, 48kB) - if faxing notification, follow up by phone.
- [Notification criteria for pathology laboratories](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/documents/notif-criteria-guide.pdf) [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/documents/notif-criteria-guide.pdf] (PDF, 55kB)

## Enhanced surveillance for public health units

- [Suspected ciguatera fish poisoning questionnaire](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/diseases/food-borne/questionnaire-ciguatera-fish.pdf) [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/diseases/food-borne/questionnaire-ciguatera-fish.pdf] (PDF, 143kB) - used by public health units to collect and manage more detailed information for enhanced case surveillance.

## Epidemiological data and reports

- View [communicable diseases data for notifiable conditions in Queensland](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/surveillance/reports/notifiable/default.asp) [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/surveillance/reports/notifiable/default.asp].
- Find [OzFoodNet annual and quarterly reports](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/diseases/foodborne/surveillance-reports) [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/diseases/foodborne/surveillance-reports].