



## Important advice to thoroughly cook mussels and not eat them raw

New Zealand Food Safety is reminding consumers to thoroughly cook mussels following an increase in cases of *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* around the country this summer.

Evidence suggests a change in water temperature and conditions may make live mussels more susceptible to the bacteria.

Whether you gather your own mussels, or buy them from a supermarket or fishmonger, we advise you to cook mussels thoroughly before eating them to avoid getting sick.

This is especially important if the people eating your mussels are pregnant, elderly or have low immunity to illnesses.

New Zealand Food Safety advises consumers to take some easy steps to avoid getting sick from *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*.



### Keep mussels cold

After collecting or buying, keep mussels cool- you can use a chilly bin filled with ice or frozen ice packs in your car. When you get them home store them in a bowl covered with a cold, wet towel on the bottom shelf in your refrigerator.



### Keep hands and utensils clean

After handling raw mussels (or any raw seafood) wash your hands and any kitchen tools to stop the bacteria from spreading in your kitchen.



### Cook mussels thoroughly

Cook mussels until steaming hot. Don't eat them raw or lightly cooked as this won't kill the *Vibrio* bacteria. You can tell when mussels are fully cooked as their shells pop open when boiled or steamed, and the mussel flesh is firm to the touch - Bon appetite!

There is advice for seafood gatherers at:

[www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/1058-Food-safety-for-seafood-gatherers](http://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/1058-Food-safety-for-seafood-gatherers)

For further help contact [foodactinfo@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:foodactinfo@mpi.govt.nz)