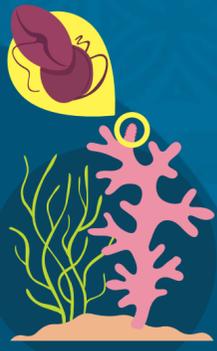




# CIGUATERA IN VANUATU

Ciguatera is a particular type of food poisoning caused by eating tropical reef fish.



Ciguatera comes from naturally occurring microscopic algae that often bloom on reefs damaged by natural events such as cyclones or human activity.



Nearly every kind of reef-associated fish species can be ciguatoxic, but some types of fish are more often or more severely ciguatoxic than others.



## Signs and symptoms

The most common signs are:

- nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, stomach pains.
- a numb or “prickly” feeling around your lips, nose, hands, feet and skin.
- a burning sensation when you touch cold water.
- pain in your muscles and joints.



## Treatment

- There is still no treatment for ciguatera, although many island communities often turn to traditional herbal remedies. Your doctor can prescribe remedies to relieve discomfort or pain.
- A specific diet, mostly excluding marine products, red meat, alcohol, and nuts must be adopted to avoid aggravating the symptoms or reappearance during the first month or as long as the symptoms persist.

## How to take action ?

Here is how to minimise your risk of getting ciguatera poisoning:



- **Do not eat fish harvested from areas known to have ciguatera fish poisoning.**



- **Space out the consumption of risky fish species.**



- **As soon as you catch a fish, cut off its head and remove the guts and other internal organs. They are the most toxic parts.**



# SOME CIGUATOXIC FISH FROM VANUATU

Nearly every kind of reef-associated fish species can be ciguatoxic, but some types of fish are more often or more severely ciguatoxic than others.

## Fish

Some of the fish that have been reported to be the most ciguatoxic in Vanuatu include:



**Bluelined surgeon**  
*Acanthurus nigroris*



**Some species of parrotfish**  
*Scarus sp.*



**Blacksaddled coral grouper**  
*Plectropomus laevis*



**Red snapper**  
*Lutjanus bohar*



**Black-banded snapper**  
*Lutjanus semicinctus*



**Blackspot emperor**  
*Lethrinus harak*



**Longface emperor**  
*Lethrinus olivaceus*



**Camouflage grouper**  
*Epinephelus polyphekadion*



**Giant sweetlips**  
*Plectorhinchus albobittatus*



**Squaretail coral grouper**  
*Plectropomus areolatus*



**Yellow-edge lyretail**  
*Variola louti*



**Great barracuda**  
*Sphyraena barracuda*



**Giant trevally**  
*Caranx ignobilis*



**Giant moray**  
*Gymnothorax javanicus*



**Yellow-edged moray**  
*Gymnothorax flavimarginatus*

## Invertebrates

In Vanuatu, trochus, turban shells and giant clams have been reported to be toxic.



**Trochus**  
*Rochia nilotica*



**Turban shells**  
Turbinidae



**Giant clams**  
Tridacnidae



**Toxic fish do not look, smell or taste different from safe fish. Cooking, freezing, smoking or salting does not make fish safe to eat.**