

What you can do?

If you find yourself in an area that you suspect is infected with the virus or some other disease:

- » Ensure that you decontaminate your fishing vessels, all equipment, wet suits and gloves between dive sites.
- » Dispose of abalone shell, meat and gut appropriately.

Decontamination must be undertaken away from the water's edge so that soapy water does not affect the health of waterways, and as soon as reasonably possible after leaving the water.

Vessels:

- » All organic matter from inside and outside the vessel should be removed. A carwash could be considered for this purpose.

Wetsuits and Dive Equipment:

- » Wetsuits should be washed with a neoprene wash (available from dive and surf shops) although a mild liquid soap or shampoo will suffice.
- » Dive tanks, buoyancy vests, regulators and masks that have not come into contact with abalone can be washed down in soap-free freshwater.
- » Equipment that has come into contact with abalone, such as catch bags, gloves, dive knives and measuring devices, should be soaked in soapy freshwater for 30 minutes and then rinsed.

People and clothing:

Divers who come into contact with abalone should:

- » Wash their hands with soapy water.
- » Spray any waterproof clothing with soapy freshwater and rinse.
- » On returning home, wash clothes with laundry detergent.
- » Decontaminated vessels, wetsuits, dive equipment and clothing should be allowed to dry.

Disposal

Abalone shell, viscera (meat and gut) should not be:

- » shucked (taken from the shell) at sea,
- » dumped into the sea,
- » used as fishing bait.

Take your abalone catch home and dispose of the waste with your household rubbish.



This brochure was developed in association with:



www.vada.com.au



Western Abalone Divers Association

Eastern Zone Abalone Industry Association

(EZAIA)



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Sustainable Fishing - Healthy Seafood

Seafood Industry Victoria Inc.

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HELP stop the spread of... Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG)



INFORMATION GUIDE

For marine users in
Victoria

What is Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG)?

- » Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG) affects the nervous tissue of abalone and rapidly causes death.
- » AVG is the first of its kind found in Australian waters.
- » Abalone with the virus can appear to be weak. In some cases protrusion of the mouth part may be visible and/or the edges of the foot curling inwards to expose clean shiny shell.



- » The Virus can be spread through direct contact, through the water column or something in the water such as mucus produced by abalone.
- » The virus only affects abalone species.
- » The Victorian Chief Veterinary Officer has advised that there are no known or likely public health or food safety implications associated with this virus.

What to do if you encounter sick abalone?

If you find patches of weak or dead abalone that you suspect may be infected with the virus :

Please call the...

Disease Watch Hotline (1800 675 888)

or the

Fish Reporting Hotline 13FISH (133474)

When making the call it would be good if you could provide the following information:

- » GPS Co-ordinates of the reef and/or full description of the area where the abalone was found (including depth of water or whether it was washed up on the beach or rocks);
- » Contact details of diver or fisher.
- » Basis for suspecting disease (clinical signs, number of dead or dying abalone).

You may be asked to collect a sample.

- » Collected samples should be sealed in a plastic bag and kept at as low a temperature as possible
- » A zip bag or a tied shopping bag would be suitable.

For further information go to: www.dpi.vic.gov.au



What are commercial fishers doing about bio-security?

- » Commercial divers have adopted strict bio-security protocols, that are included in the *Abalone Harvesting Code of Practice*.
- » Bio-security protocols have also been established for other commercial fishers.

For more information on commercial dive sector in Victoria go to: www.vada.com.au/Virus/Virus.htm

