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Author(s)	Omori, Gendo; Kato, Yoshiko
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Letters to the Editors

A Staphylococcal Food-poisoning Caused By A Coagulase Negative Strain

On April 17th, 1959, high school students staying in Osaka City suffered from food poisoning. Forty of 178 students complained of mild diarrhoea and abdominal pains between 4:30 and 6 p.m.. They arrived in Osaka on the previous evening and took breakfast and lunch prepared by a hotel at which they stayed.

Fecal specimens were taken from 7 patients with diarrhoea, and staphylococci grew on 3 plates of nutrient agar as though a pure culture had been streaked on. Tests were also made for *Shigella* and *Salmonella* but they were not positive. Bacteriological examinations were made on the remains of the breakfast at the hotel and also on the fingers of the cooks, kitchen tables, knives, and dishes. Staphylococci were found in only one of the dishes. 21,000 staphylococci were counted in 1 ml. of 10 ml. sterile saline used to wash off the bacteria from the dishes.

Two strains of staphylococci from the dishes and all strains from three positive plates of fecal specimens were compared for their bacteriological characteristics.

The free coagulase test was negative in all five strains. Bound coagulase could not be tested because of the strong spontaneous agglutination. Fermentation of glucose, mannitol, lactose, fructose and maltose were all positive and that of galactose was negative. Gelatin was liquefied by five strains and hemolysis on rabbit blood agar was also positive in five strains.

Tests were made for enterotoxin in two strains, one from the feces and one from a dish. When administered to two kittens (Davison et al., 1938) vomiting was occurred within 30 minutes.

A lysozyme-like enzyme was detected by the method of Kashiba et al. (1959) in the supernatants of all 5 strains.

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GENDO OMORI
YOSHIKO KATO

Osaka Municipal Hygienic Laboratory
Osaka, Japan
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