

You may want to rethink that late-night donair

Spicy meat treat is under food-safety microscope

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Staff Reporter

A bad donair is a good excuse for a nasty hangover.

Now it's the focus of a federal-provincial-territorial donair working group that is looking at food-safety issues when it comes to preparing the spiced meaty snack that's served wrapped in a pita with tomatoes and onions.

Donair meat, usually ground beef, is processed in large cones.

"They're cooked slowly on a spit, if you will, and the cooked meat is sliced off from the outside of the cone, which exposes the less cooked meat below," said Paul Duchesne of Health Canada.

"So that technique can pose risks because under-cooked meat could be accidentally served and then you get the juices from the uncooked meat that could contaminate the cooked meat."

Donairs have been linked to three outbreaks of *E. coli* 0157:H7 in Canada since 2004. There have been a total of about 100 confirmed or suspected cases of food-borne illness related to donairs in this country. None of them have been in Nova Scotia, but this province — long a hotbed of donair consumption — is taking part in the study.

"Obviously we have a significant stakeholder group here in Nova Scotia for donairs. They're on

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WHAT'S IN A DONAIR?



Most places make donairs with pure beef and a combination of spices.

"Everybody has a different kind of secret recipe," said Dave Baddour, manager of Tony's Donair & Pizza on Robie Street in Halifax.

Donair meat is served in a warm pita and dressed with raw onion, tomato and a special sauce of evaporated milk, sugar and vinegar.

Good or bad, we want your donair stories.

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