



## Beware Mexican onions—region health department

lthough it isn't believed any green onions conta-I minated with Hepatitis A have entered the country, area residents are advised by Halton Region Health Department to take precautions anyway.

Halton residents are being advised to thoroughly cook green onions to minimize the risk of illness by reducing or eliminating the virus. Steaming, boiling, or sautéing the green onions for at least two minutes should be sufficient to ensure the virus is inactive.

The advisory comes on the heels of an outbreak of Hepatitis A in

the U.S. caused by eating raw or undercooked green onions shipped from Mexico.

The Health Department reminds residents of other safe food handling practices to reduce the spread of food borne illness:

- Wash all fruits and vegetables before eating
- Wash hands, utensils, knives and cutting boards before preparing food, and after contact with raw foods
- Cook foods to the proper temperature (for a list of specific temperatures go to www.region.halton.on.ca/health.

 Store food safely before and after cooking.

Hepatitis A is a liver disease that develops in people within six weeks of exposure to the virus. Symptoms include jaundice, fatigue, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, nausea, diarrhea and fever.

Those who have similar symptoms should see a health care professional.

For more information about food safety or Hepatitis A call Halton Health Department at 1-866-4-HALTON (1-866-442-5866) or visit the above Web site.

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