

# Abalone disease

## ABALONE DISEASE FOUND IN THE SOUTH WEST

*Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis* (AVG), also known as abalone disease, is a viral disease which affects the nervous system of abalone.

Abalone with the illness will have a curling foot, its mouth will be swollen, and it will find it hard to stick to rocks.

It makes the abalone weak and it usually dies

**Humans cannot catch this illness.**

## CONTROL ORDERS ARE IN PLACE

A control order regulates the activities that can occur within an area.

There is a control area in place that goes from the western tip of Bridgewater Bay to Cape Grant (please look at the map on the next page). Abalone with the virus have been found in this area.

In the Control Area, you cannot:

- collect shellfish and sea urchins
- use any fishing equipment with a sinker attached
- remove or take anything from the bottom of the ocean
- move any abalone or shellfish out of this area
- anchor any boat
- dive – which includes scuba diving or snorkelling.

In this area you can:

- fish with an unweighted line
- have a boat in the control area to fish but **do not** anchor
- swim
- surf
- paddle board
- walk along the shore/rocks.

Not following the requirements of the Control Order could contribute to spreading the disease and penalties may apply.

**If you find an abalone that you think is sick, anywhere in Victoria, please call the 24-hour Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888.**

A Fisheries Notice remains in place that prohibits fishing within 750 metres of the Yumbah Narrawong Aquaculture water intake pipes. More details online [vfa.vic.gov.au](http://vfa.vic.gov.au).

## HOW DOES ABALONE CATCH THE DISEASE?

The virus can move through the water. An abalone can get sick if it is near another abalone that is also sick.

Even abalone gut, shells, mucus, fishing equipment, (including wetsuits), anchors, hoop nets and ropes, that has been near a sick abalone, can spread the illness.

## HOW DO I PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ABALONE DISEASE?

You can help stop the spread by:

- NOT fishing with a sinker or using any type of equipment that will touch the bottom of the ocean
- NOT diving in the control area and
- ALWAYS wash your boat, fishing, and diving equipment. See the instructions below.

## HOW SHOULD I CLEAN MY BOAT AND EQUIPMENT?

If you have been diving or fishing from a boat that has been in or through the control area, **before** you go fishing or diving again you should:

- rinse off any thing (like seaweed or sand) from the floor of the boat and all equipment you are using
- put your wetsuit, gloves, hood, mask and snorkel or other fishing equipment into a tub of soapy water and leave there while you come to shore.

If you have been diving or fishing from a boat **and** when you get back to shore you should:

- move your boat well away from the ocean and wash it. If you are close to home you could wash it there however, if you have a long drive you should consider using a car wash
- wash your whole boat and everything on it. This should be done by scrubbing it or with high-pressure sprayer and soap
- wash off all surface areas you can see on your boat with fresh water.

# Abalone disease - biosecurity

If you have been diving or fishing from a boat or from the shore **and before** you go fishing or diving again you should:

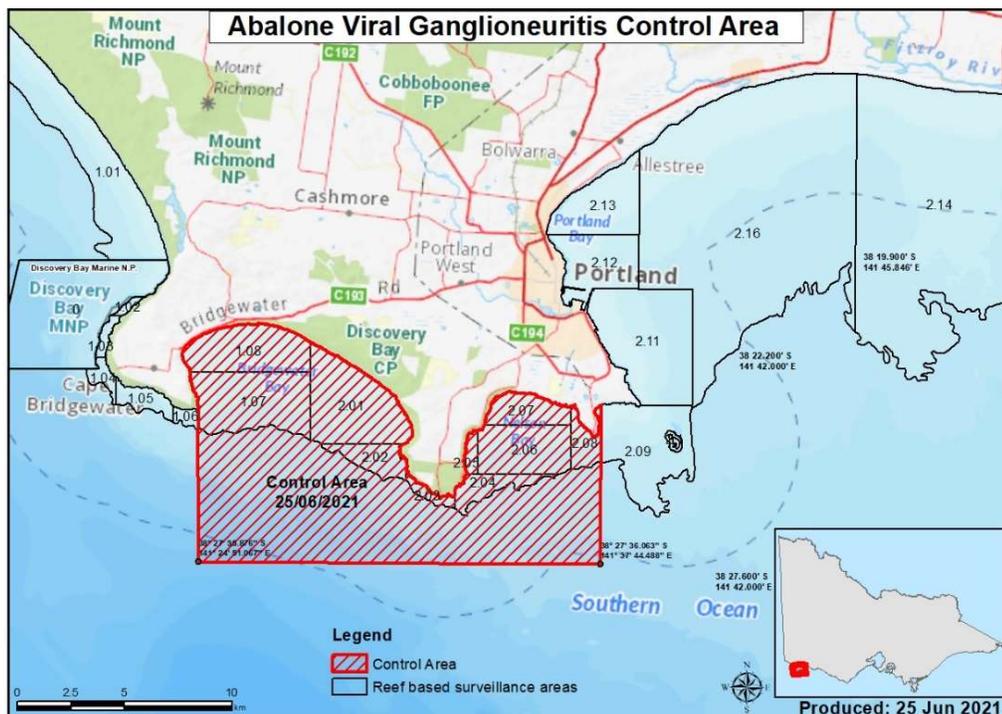
- rinse all your fishing and dive equipment with fresh water to remove salt. Don't forget to wash inside of buoyancy vest if used
- wash your wetsuit on the inside and outside, with soap or a wetsuit cleaning solution to make sure anything that could be contaminated is cleaned away
- put all your other equipment into a large plastic bin. Push it all down so that is covered with disinfectant or soapy water and leave it for 30 minutes. This includes your catch bag and gloves
- thoroughly rinse all dive equipment in fresh water and dry outside
- divers who touch abalone should wash their hands with soapy water

- waterproof or protective clothing should be rinsed then soaked in diluted detergent for 30 minutes. Once completed wash with freshwater and dry outside
- wash any clothes you have worn in the washing machine with your normal soap before you wear them again.

**DO NOT** go back into the water or launch your boat again until you have done all of this.

## DISPOSAL OF ABALONE WASTE

- Take your abalone catch home with you whole
- After you have cleaned it put everything you don't want into your household rubbish
- **Never** throw any part of the abalone back into the sea.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit: [agriculture.vic.gov.au/abalone](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/abalone)