

## TBS's white bean diet made 158 people sick, ministry says

The health ministry said Monday that the number of people who suffered nausea or diarrhea after trying a dieting method using white kidney beans aired on TBS has reached 158, of whom 30 were hospitalized.

The Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry called on the broadcaster to take preventive measures.

According to the ministry, the beans, if eaten raw or half-heated, can cause ill effects such as diarrhea because of lectin, a saccharide-binding protein contained in the beans.

The "Pi-Kan Body!" hourlong health information program aired May 6 encouraged viewers to try a dieting method involving rice sprinkled with ground white kidney beans roasted for about three minutes.

Most of the 158 people had watched the program and developed symptoms two to four hours after they tried the method, the ministry said. None was in serious condition and all have gotten better, it said.

"We have received many complaints from different parts of the country about symptoms of vomiting and diarrhea," TBS said. "We take the health ministry's findings and warning seriously and will work on this problem accordingly. We'd like to apologize deeply to those who became ill and other affected people."

TBS said it will soon post information on its Web site detailing the symptoms and how lectin can cause ill effects.

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