

Worse than childbirth, says salmonella victim

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THE number of people struck down with food poisoning after eating a buffet breakfast at the InterContinental Adelaide has hit 32, as a mother of two has described the week-long pain she endured as worse than childbirth.

Latest figures from SA Health reveal the surge in salmonella cases – including 12 hospitalisations – as a result of an unknown source in the hotel's popular breakfast spread on Sunday, July 31, which included scrambled eggs, sausages and bacon.

A 45-year-old single mum has told *The Advertiser* she will seek compensation after eating at the North Terrace hotel's

Riverside Restaurant that day. "I was in severe pain – worse than labour pain," she said.

"I was in absolute agony rolling around in pain, vomiting and had severe diarrhoea."

The woman, who was hospitalised on Wednesday, said she suddenly fell ill on the Sunday night and was forced to take last week off work.

"I keep myself very fit, I run up to 10km a week, but if this had hit someone frail or elderly, I hate to think what would have happened," she said.

Like many other victims, she believed the source of the salmonella could have been the scrambled eggs.

"I had lots," she said.

Since the latest salmonella scare broke, *The Advertiser* has received more than a dozen

calls and emails from victims. "I had fallen ill by Sunday night and was taken to hospital by ambulance on Thursday morning after suffering chronic diarrhoea and stomach cramps for four days (and) I'm still unfit to go back to work one week later," one man wrote yesterday.

A woman wrote. "My fiance and I both experienced diarrhoea and severe stomach cramps and were bedridden for two days."

InterContinental Adelaide general manager Colin McCandless said the hotel chain continued to work with the Adelaide City Council, which was "leading the investigation" to determine the cause of the outbreak.

He did not rule out offering

compensation to those affected. "We are absolutely not shying away from our responsibility. We are committed to undertake the appropriate level of service recovery with every single person affected," he said.

Patrick Boylen, managing director of law firm Duncan Basheer Hannon, said those who had fallen ill could claim compensation from the InterContinental because the hotel had an "obligation to provide safe food that doesn't make you unwell".

"What they can claim depends on their individual circumstances (such as) time off work, medical costs ...," he said.

The ACC and SA Health are investigating to find the source of the salmonella.