

Food-Borne Illnesses

Name of illness	What causes it	Symptoms	Characteristics of illness	Preventative measures
<p>Salmonellosis Examples of foods involved: poultry, red meats, eggs, dried foods, and dairy products.</p>	<p>Salmonellae. This bacteria is wide-spread in nature and lives and grows in the intestinal tracts of human beings and animals.</p>	<p>Sever headache, followed by vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, and fever. Infants, elderly, and persons with low resistance are most susceptible. Severe infections cause high fever and may even cause death.</p>	<p>Transmitted by eating contaminated food, or by contact with infected persons or carriers of the infection. Also transmitted by insects, rodents, and pets. Onset: Usually within 12 to 36 hours. Duration: 2 to 7 days.</p>	<p>Salmonellae in food are destroyed by heating the food to 140°F and holding for 10 minutes or to higher temperatures for less time; for instance, 155°F for a few seconds. Refrigeration at 40°F inhibits the increase of Salmonellae, but they remain alive in foods in the refrigerator or freezer, and even in dried foods.</p>
<p>Perfringens Examples of foods involved: stews, soups, or gravies made from poultry or red meat.</p>	<p><i>Clostridium Perfringens</i>. Spore-forming bacteria that grow in the absence of oxygen. Temperatures reached in thorough cooking of most foods are sufficient to destroy vegetative cells, but heat-resistant spores can survive.</p>	<p>Nausea without vomiting, diarrhea, acute inflammation of stomach and intestines.</p>	<p>Transmitted by eating food contaminated with abnormally large numbers of the bacteria. Onset: Usually within 8 to 20 hours. Duration: May persist for 24 hours.</p>	<p>To prevent growth of surviving bacteria in cooked meats, gravies, and meat casseroles that are to be eaten later, cool foods rapidly and refrigerate promptly at 40°F or below, or hold them about 140°F.</p>
<p>Staphylococcal poisoning (frequently called staph) Examples of foods involved: custards, egg salad, potato salad, chicken salad, macaroni salad, ham, salami, and cheese.</p>	<p><i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>. Bacteria fairly resistant to heat. Bacteria growing in food produce a toxin that is extremely resistant to heat.</p>	<p>Vomiting, diarrhea, prostration, abdominal cramps. Generally mild and often attributed to other causes.</p>	<p>Transmitted by food handlers who carry the bacteria and by eating food containing the toxin.</p>	<p>Growth of bacteria that produces toxin is inhibited by keeping hot foods above 140°F and cold foods at or below 40°F. Toxin is destroyed by boiling for several hours, or heating the food in a pressure cooker at 240°F for 30 minutes.</p>
<p>Botulism Examples of foods involved: canned low-acid foods, and smoked fish</p>	<p><i>Clostridium botulinum</i>. Spore-forming organisms that grow and produce toxin in the absence of oxygen, such as in a sealed container.</p>	<p>Double vision, inability to swallow, speech difficulty, progressive respiratory paralysis. Fatality rate is high, about 65% in the United States.</p>	<p>Transmitted by eating food containing the toxin. Onset: Usually within 12 to 36 hours or longer. Duration: 3 to 6 days.</p>	<p>Bacterial spores in food are destroyed by high temperatures obtained only in the pressure canner.* More than 6 hours is needed to kill the spores at boiling temperature (212°F). The toxin is destroyed by boiling for 10 to 20 minutes; time required depends on kind of food.</p>