

Food-Borne Pathogens



76 million cases of food-borne disease occur each year in the United States. The great majority of these cases are mild and cause symptoms for only a day or two. CDC estimates 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths are related to food-borne diseases each year. The most severe cases tend to occur in the **very old, very young, compromised immune** systems, and in healthy people **exposed to a very high dose** of an organism.

Food-borne disease is caused by consuming contaminated foods or beverages. In addition, poisonous chemicals, or other harmful substances can cause food-borne diseases if they are present in food.

SYMPTOMS

- high fever (temperature over 101.5 F, measured orally)
- blood in the stools
- prolonged vomiting that prevents keeping liquids down (which can lead to dehydration)
- signs of dehydration: a decrease in urination, a dry mouth and throat, and feeling dizzy when standing up.
- diarrheal illness that lasts more than 3 days

“Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser; teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.”

Proverbs 9:9

Provided by Community of Christ Health Ministries Association

www.HMACofChrist.org 816-833-1000 ext 1262

For more information visit: www.cdc.gov

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COMMON PATHOGENS

Campylobacter is a bacterial pathogen that causes fever, diarrhea, and abdominal cramps. These bacteria live in the intestines of healthy birds, and most raw poultry meat has Campylobacter.

Salmonella is also a bacterium that is widespread in the intestines of birds, reptiles and mammals. The illness typically includes fever, diarrhea and abdominal cramps.

E. coli O157:H7 is a bacterial pathogen that has a reservoir in cattle and other similar animals. Human illness typically follows consumption of food or water that has been contaminated with microscopic amounts of cow feces.

Common diseases of Shigella, hepatitis A, and the parasites Giardia Lamblia and Cryptosporidia are occasionally food-borne, even though they are usually transmitted by other routes.

PROTECT FROM FOOD-BORNE ILLNESS

COOK: meat, poultry and eggs thoroughly. For example, ground beef should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160° F. Eggs should be cooked until the yolk is firm.

SEPARATE: Don't cross-contaminate one food with another. Avoid cross-contaminating foods by washing hands, utensils, and cutting boards after they have been in contact with raw meat or poultry and before they touch another food. Put cooked meat on a clean platter, rather than back on the one that held the raw meat.

CHILL: Refrigerate leftovers promptly. Bacteria can grow quickly at room temperature so maintain less than a 4 hour window after cooking until refrigeration.

CLEAN: Wash produce. Rinse fruits and vegetables in running tap water to remove visible dirt and grime. Remove outer layers of cabbage and lettuce and discard.

WASH: Wash your hands with soap and water before and after preparing food.

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