

Identifying Common Foodborne Illness

Causative Pathogen	Incubation Time	Length of Illness	Common Symptoms	Foods Involved / Sources	Prevention
Bacillus Cerus	1 - 16 hours	6-24 hours	nausea, vomiting, cramping, diarrhea	rice & rice dishes, vegetables, sauces	Cook to proper temp. Reheat quickly. Cool foods rapidly.
Campylobacter	2-5 days	1-4 days	cramping, fever, diarrhea, nausea, headache, vomiting	unpasteurized dairy, poultry & meats, infected food handler	Thoroughly cook all foods. Use only pasteurized dairy products. Proper hand washing.
Clostridium perfringens	8-24 hours	24-36 hours	abdominal cramping, diarrhea, nausea	metals, poultry, gravy, beans, stews, foods cooked slowly	Cook & reheat foods to proper temp. Cook in small batches. Cool foods rapidly.
Shiga Toxin-Producing E. coli	12-72 hours	1-4 days	diarrhea-often bloody, severe cramping, nausea, vomiting, fever	raw & undercooked ground meats (esp. ground beef)	Thoroughly cook ground meats. Avoid cross-contamination.
Hepatitis A	10-50 days	1-2 weeks; severe cases may last several months	mild or no symptoms, then sudden onset of fever, general discomfort, fatigue, headache, nausea, loss of appetite, vomiting, abdominal pain, & jaundice after several days	water, ice, shellfish, salads, cold cuts, sandwiches, fruits, fruit juices, milk, milk products, vegetables, any food that will not receive a further heat treatment	Obtain shellfish from approved sources. Prevent cross-contamination from hands. Ensure foodhandlers practice good hand washing & no bare hand contact.
Listeria monocytogenes	1 day - 3 weeks	Indefinite, depends on treatment, severe	nausea, vomiting, fever, chills, headache, meningitis, miscarriages	unpasteurized dairy, cheese, vegetables, seafood, poultry	Use only pasteurized dairy products. Cook properly. Hold refrigerated for limited time.
Norovirus	24-48 hours	1-2 days	cramping, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, headache, fever	raw fruit, raw vegetables, prepared salads, raw shellfish	Thoroughly cook foods. Wash hands. Use certified shellfish. No bare hand contact.
(Staph) Staphylococcus aureus	1-7 hours	1-2 days	onset abrupt and often severe, nausea, vomiting, cramping, sometimes diarrhea	ready-to-eat foods, i.e. sandwiches, salads, ham & other meats, potato salads, custards, warmed-over foods; often from infected foodhandlers-cuts, throat, nose & acne	Practice good hand washing & hygiene. Avoid contamination. Reduce bare hand contact with foods. Exclude foodhandlers with cuts & lesions. Rapidly cool foods.
Salmonella	6-72 hours	1-3 days	abdominal cramping, headache, nausea, diarrhea, fever, sometimes vomiting	undercooked or raw meats, poultry & shell eggs, poultry & egg salads, egg custards & sauces, protein foods, pets & infected foodhandlers	Avoid cross-contamination. Cool & refrigerate foods immediately. Cook meats/poultry thoroughly. Practice good hand washing.
Shigella	12 hours - 7 days	4-7 days, depends on treatment	diarrhea-often bloody, cramping, fever, nausea, sometimes vomiting	ready-to-eat foods associated with bare hand contact (salads, sandwiches, etc.) source: humans (feces) & flies	Practice good hand washing after using toilet. Use approved water & foods. Control flies. No bare hand contact.