

Food Poisoning Fact Sheet

What is Food Poisoning?

Food poisoning is an illness you get from eating contaminated food.

The more frequent causes are:

- toxins produced by bacteria in food
- bacteria, viruses, or parasites found in raw or undercooked food
- toxins produced by certain harmful types of fish
- chemical contaminants

Outbreaks of illness usually occur within a short period of time (a few hours to a few days) after a meal, among individuals who have consumed foods in common.

What are the symptoms?

Diarrhea is usually the first symptom of food poisoning. You may also experience vomiting, stomach cramps, and have an upset stomach.

How is it treated?

Food poisoning usually goes away within two to three days. It is important to drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.

To prevent and control food poisoning:

- Avoid food contamination or cross contamination by keeping your knives, cutting boards and counters clean.
- Prevent further spread by washing your hands before handling food.
- Ensure that meat, chicken, fish and eggs are fully cooked.

Other Questions?

Talk to your health care provider or call our Communicable Disease Program at 613-966-5500 x349. Toll Free 1-800-267-2803 | TTY Dial 711 (1-800-267-6511) | www.hpepublichealth.ca

Reference

- Heymann, D.L. (2008). *Control of Communicable Diseases Manual* (19th Ed.), Washington, DC: American Public Health Association.

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