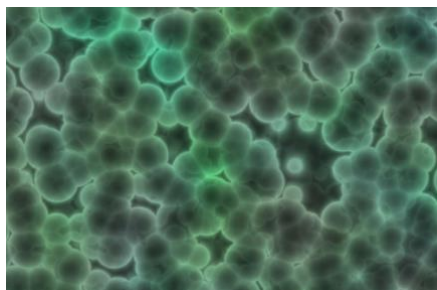


Unit 207: Food safety

Handout 1: Food poisoning bacteria



Food that is not stored, handled and prepared in the correct way can cause food poisoning. Typical symptoms of illness caused by food poisoning are diarrhoea, vomiting, nausea and stomach pains. Not only is food poisoning an unpleasant experience it can also be life threatening particularly to vulnerable people. The onset of symptoms may appear after a couple of hours or alternatively after an interval of several days.

Bacterial reproduction is usually referred to as multiplication. Bacteria multiply by dividing in two – a process known as binary fission. Each bacteria needs 10 to 20 minutes to multiply in the right conditions, it is possible for just one bacterium to lead to the production of millions of bacteria within a few hours.

The chart below provides information about the sources of food poisoning bacteria describing both the symptoms and onset times

Organism	Source	Onset period	Symptoms
Bacillus Cereus	Widespread in environment, soil and cereals	Usually 1 - 5 hours	Abdominal pain, vomiting Diarrhoea
Campylobacter	Wild animal and mammals	18 - 36 hours	Abdominal pain Bloody diarrhoea
Clostridium Botulinum	Soil, vegetables and fish	12 - 36 hours	Difficulty in swallowing and breathing Paralysis Can be fatal
Clostridium Perfringens	Soil and intestines of mammals	12 - 18 hours	Abdominal pain Diarrhoea
E-Coli	Intestines of humans and animals	12 - 24 hours	Abdominal pain Diarrhoea

	Unpasteurised milk and unpasteurised milk products		
Listeria	Widespread in environment, soil and river water Unpasteurised milk, unpasteurised milk products, processing plants, contaminated meats	Weeks or months	Contraction of meningitis and septicaemia Can be fatal
Salmonella	Animal and human Intestines Milk and eggs	12 - 36 hours	Abdominal pain Vomiting Diarrhoea
Staphylococcus Aureus	Human nose Throat and wounds	1 - 6 hours	Abdominal pain Vomiting Reduced temperature