

3 STORAGE of Cooked Food

Bacteria can multiply in numbers rapidly at room temperature. All food prepared in advance must be refrigerated to ensure minimal bacterial growth.

Food consumed hot must be stored at a *holding temperature* of not less than 60°C, while cold-ready-to-eat food should be stored at temperature below 4°C.

It is wrong for vendors to sell food left at room temperature for long period of time. Reheating such food may **NOT** be sufficient to destroy the microorganisms that cause food poisoning.

Look out for food handlers who make mishandled food appear safe.



HOW YOU CAN AVOID FOOD POISONING?



Eat in food premises that are clean and reputable. Some outlets have *ratings* which are exhibited and can be used as a guide. Avoid street vendors, hawker stalls or any other food premises which are dirty and unhygienic.



Eat properly and adequately cooked food.



Be careful about eating partially cooked food especially seafood.



Drink potable water from safe sources



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You Can Avoid It

FOOD POISONING

Food poisoning results from eating food contaminated with bacteria, viruses, other organisms, chemicals, poisonous plants or fish.

Bacteria can cause food poisoning by infection (*multiplying in large numbers*) or intoxication (*producing toxins*) in the food or in the victim's gastro-intestinal tract.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS of Food Poisoning

Typical symptoms are sudden onset of nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal cramps and fever. Infants and elderly people, persons with low resistance are most susceptible. Severe infections cause high fever and may require hospitalisation.

Onset : Usually within 2 – 72 hours after consuming food/drink

Duration of illness : Several hours to 7 days



SOME REASONS for Food Poisoning to Occur

1

FOOD VENDORS who do not care about cleanliness:

- They work with unclean hands, unkempt hair, long fingernails and do not wear proper attire.
- They keep their food premises dirty and do not dispose rubbish properly.
- Do not cover their food.
- Do not have proper hand washing facilities and toilet.
- Use their hands to dispense food.
- They smoke, cough and spit while preparing or dispensing food

2

FOOD Not Adequately cooked

Raw or uncooked food high in protein such as meat, poultry, seafood, eggs and dairy products may contain several harmful microorganisms that can cause food poisoning.

The main bacteria associated with food poisoning are: *Salmonella*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Bacillus cereus*, *Clostridium perfringens*, *Camphylobactor*; and *Listeria monocytogenes*.

It is essential that frozen meat and poultry is adequately thawed followed by thorough cooking to ensure these bacteria are destroyed. Avoid consuming food high in protein content that are not adequately cooked or stored at room temperature for long period of time.

