



FOOD POISONING

Food Poisoning is an illness which occurs after eating or drinking anything that is contaminated by germs or sometimes chemicals. You can only be sure you have food poisoning if you have a sample tested by your doctor. There are viral infections that cause similar symptoms to food poisoning.

Symptoms depend on the type of germ or chemical, but diarrhoea, sickness, stomach pains and sometimes fever are the most common.

More information on Campylobacter and Salmonella is given over the page. You can find information on a range of infectious diseases at:-

www.gov.uk/topic/health-protection/infectious-diseases

If I am suffering from food poisoning, is there anything I should do whilst I am ill?

- Wash your hands with soap in warm running water and dry thoroughly, especially when preparing food and after using the toilet.
- Avoid close contact with other people until the diarrhoea has stopped.
- Clean toilet seats, flush handles, door handles and taps frequently with a hot soapy water and disinfectant solution.
- Make sure everyone has their own towel and flannel. Soiled clothes and bedding should be washed on their own in the washing machine on the hottest cycle.
- Avoid preparing food for other people.

Will I need to stay off work/school?

You should stay away from work or school until at least 48 hours after your first normal stool. If your work involves handling food, nursing or working with the young, sick or elderly you must tell your employer.

How can I tell if food is contaminated?

You can't! Even food which looks and tastes alright can cause food poisoning.

How can I avoid food poisoning in the future?

Make sure you :-

- Store raw and cooked food apart and keep raw meat on the bottom shelf of the fridge.
- Do not wash raw meat or poultry as this spread germs around the kitchen
- Wash raw fruit and vegetables thoroughly before cooking
- Use separate utensils and chopping boards for raw and cooked foods.
- Cook food thoroughly, especially meat, so that it is piping hot, as this will destroy germs
- If you want to keep food for later, cool it quickly and put it in the fridge as soon as possible or keep it hot in the oven.
- Do not eat foods made with raw eggs, e.g. home made mayonnaise, some mousses and desserts and do not drink unpasteurized (green top) milk.
- Keep kitchen surfaces and equipment, knives, chopping boards, and dish cloths clean
- Keep pets and pet food away from food, work surfaces and utensils.

Personal hygiene is also important

- Do not smoke or eat when handling food.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water:
 - before preparing and eating food
 - after handling raw food
 - after going to the toilet or changing a baby's nappy
 - after contact with pets or other animals and working in the garden
- Do not drink untreated water from lakes, rivers or streams

Name	Campylobacter	Salmonella
Who is at risk?	Anyone, but young children under 5 years of age, those over 60 and travellers to developing countries are at greater risk.	Anyone, but young children, the elderly and people who have immune systems that are not working properly (e.g. people with cancer) have a greater risk of becoming severely ill.
What are the symptoms?	Diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach pains and cramps, fever, and generally feeling unwell. Symptoms usually:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop in 2 to 5 days but can take up to 10 days • last for 2 to 2 days 	Diarrhoea, stomach cramps and sometimes vomiting and fever. Symptoms usually:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop in 12 to 72 hours • last for 4 to 7 days
How do you get infected	Usually by eating contaminated food. Campylobacter is particularly found in raw poultry and is common in other raw meat. You can also get campylobacter from infected pets and other animals. Cross contamination from meat to other foodstuffs in the kitchen is a particular problem.	Usually by eating contaminated food. Salmonella bacteria live in the gut of many farm animals and can affect meat, eggs, poultry, and milk. Other foods like green vegetables, fruit and shellfish can be contaminated from manure in soil or sewage in water. Dogs, cats, and rodents can occasionally become infected. Salmonella can be spread from person to person by poor hygiene, by failing to wash your hands properly after going to the toilet, or after handling contaminated food.
Specific controls	Pay special attention to hygiene during farm visits, washing hands after any contact with animals, and eating only in designated areas	Wash hands after contact with pets and other animals, especially reptiles and amphibians
What is the treatment?	Most people recover without treatment within 2 to 5 days, although it can sometimes take up to 10 days to get better Drinking plenty of fluids is important as diarrhoea or vomiting can lead to dehydration. Your doctor may recommend a rehydration solution, available from your pharmacist.	Most people recover without treatment, Sometimes severe cases are treated with antibiotics.

If you have concerns about your health contact NHS England on 111, or see your doctor.

If you believe your illness may be part of a large number of cases you can contact us as follows:-

EREWASH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Environmental Health

Merlin House, Merlin Way, Ilkeston, Derbyshire. DE7 4RA

Telephone: 0115 907 2244 ext 3841

Email: environmentalhealth@erewash.gov.uk