

# Big Six Foodborne Illnesses

## Shiga toxin producing E. coli (STEC) – E. coli



Causes more than **3,000 cases of foodborne illness** annually; anyone can become infected; very young children and elderly most likely to develop severe illness; **spreads by fecal contamination of food and water as well as cross-contamination during food preparation**

- **FOODS:** raw or undercooked beef (especially hamburger), raw fruits and vegetables, unpasteurized milk or juice, contaminated water
- **INCUBATION PERIOD:** 1-8 days
- **SYMPTOMS:** Include severe stomach cramps, diarrhea (often bloody), mild fever and vomiting.
- **PREVENTION:** Cook implicated food to 155°F, prevent cross contamination between raw and ready to eat foods, wash hand properly and frequently, correctly wash, rinse and sanitize food contact surfaces

## Nontyphoidal Salmonella



Causes **1 million cases of intestinal illnesses** annually; ingesting even a small amount of bacteria can cause illness; **spreads to humans through consumption of contaminated foods of animal origin like eggs, meat poultry and milk, as well as those foods that have come into contact with infected animal waste**

**FOODS:** Produce such as tomatoes, peppers, cantaloupes; contaminated water, poultry and eggs, meat, milk and dairy products

**INCUBATION PERIOD:** usually 12 to 72 hours, but can be up to a week or more

**SYMPTOMS:** acute diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever and vomiting

**PREVENTION:** Cook implicated food to 155°F, prevent cross contamination between raw and ready to eat foods, wash hand properly and frequently, correctly wash, rinse and sanitize food contact surfaces

## Salmonella Typhi



Humans are the only hosts of this bacterial disease; **spreads through food or water contaminated by stool of an infected person**; causes typhoid fever and paratyphoid fever; bacteria present in feces for weeks after symptoms subsided

**FOODS:** eady-to-eat foods, beverages, contaminated water

**INCUBATION PERIOD:** 1 to 3 weeks, however may be a long as 2 months

**SYMPTOMS:** Fever, weakness, stomach pain, rash, diarrhea or constipation

**PREVENTION:** Wash hands thoroughly and frequently, cook foods to minimum prescribed internal temperatures, prevent cross contamination

## Shigella



Causes **300,000 cases** annually; spreads easily from person to person by eating or drinking food and water contaminated with the bacteria; it can also **spread by coming in direct contact with feces from an infected person**

**FOODS:** Foods that are easily contaminated by hands – various types of salads, food that has been in contact with contaminated water – produce

**INCUBATION PERIOD:** 4-7 days

**SYMPTOMS:** Diarrhea (sometimes bloody), fever, stomach pain, dehydration

**PREVENTION:** Wash hands frequently and properly, wash vegetables, control flies inside and outside of the facility

## Hepatitis A



Causes inflammation of the liver; **spreads primarily through food or water contaminated by stool of an infected person**

**FOODS:** Ready-to-eat food, shellfish from contaminated water

**INCUBATION PERIOD:** 15-50 days, average 28 days

**SYMPTOMS:** Jaundice, loss of appetite, nausea, fever, diarrhea

**PREVENTION:** Wash hands frequently and properly, **avoid bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods**, purchase shellfish from an approved supplier

## Norovirus

Highly infectious; **leading cause of foodborne illness**; spreads through food handled by someone who is infected with the virus or through the air after a vomit transmission has occurred

**FOODS:** Ready-to-eat foods, shellfish from contaminated water

**INCUBATION PERIOD:** 12-48 hours

**SYMPTOMS:** Nausea, abdominal cramping, vomiting, diarrhea, fever

**PREVENTION:** Wash hands frequently and properly, avoid bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods, purchase shellfish from an approved supplier



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