

# Actsafes Safety Bulletin #32a

## FOOD HANDLING - ADDENDUM A



FOOD SAFETY: GUIDELINES FOR FOOD SERVICE PROVIDERS AND CRAFT SERVICES

COMMON BACTERIA, RELATED ILLNESSES AND SYMPTOMS

### 1. SALMONELLA:

This common bacteria found on raw meats, poultry, fish and raw eggs grows rapidly. Food should be handled with care to prevent cross contamination of raw food products such as salads. Often, contamination occurs from chopping salads with the same knife or on the same cutting board as the one used to prepare meat or poultry.

Onset time of symptoms is approximately 12 - 24 hours after the consumption of contaminated food. Symptoms can include diarrhea, vomiting, fever, chills, stomach cramps, headache, and malaise and can be severe.

### 1. STAPHYLOCOCCUS:

a. This is usually the leading cause of acute food poisoning. The bacteria multiplies rapidly in such foods as pastries, custards, creamy salad dressings and meat products within as little as 2 hours at temperatures over 7°C (45°F) and under 49°C (120°F). As the bacteria grows, it produces a toxin which, when ingested, causes the symptoms associated with food poisoning. Bacteria are normally present in infected cuts, abscesses and nasal secretions. Once the food is contaminated and the toxin is produced, re-heating is of no use. The toxin is thermo-stable and will not be killed by heating.

a. Onset time of symptoms is within 1 - 6 hours after consumption. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, cramps and diarrhea. The onset time, severity and duration of symptoms depend on the dose and an individual's susceptibility.

### 2. CLOSTRIDIUM:

a. This common bacteria is found in feces of man, cattle, pigs and rodents. This bacteria also produces a toxin which is heat resistant. The bacteria multiplies in foods such as meats, stews, soups and meat pies which are held for long periods at serving temperatures or when are not cooled properly between servings.

b. Onset time of symptoms is approximately 10 - 12 hours after consumption. Symptoms, which include sudden acute abdominal pain followed by diarrhea, are not usually severe and can last a day or so.

### 3. ESCHERICHIA COLI (E. Coli):

a. This bacteria is found in feces of man, cattle, pigs and rodents. This bacteria also produces a toxin which is heat resistant. The bacteria multiplies in foods such as meats, stews, soups and meat pies which are held for long periods at serving temperatures or when are not cooled properly between servings.

b. Onset time of symptoms is approximately 10 - 12 hours after consumption. Symptoms, which include sudden acute abdominal pain followed by diarrhea, which are not usually severe and can last a day or so.

c. All proper provincial and city health permits and approvals to operate a food facility/mobile food preparation vehicle should be obtained and be current.



4. HEPATITIS A:

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious virus that attacks the liver. The hepatitis A virus is found in the feces (stool) of those infected with the virus. Infected food handlers may carry the virus on their hands and may contaminate ready-to-eat food when they do not use good hand-washing practices after every restroom visit and have bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food. Cold cuts and sandwiches, fruits and fruit juices, milk and milk products, vegetables, salads, shellfish, and iced drinks are commonly implicated in outbreaks. Water, shellfish, and salads are the most frequent sources.

An infected person can spread the virus for up to almost a month. If a food handler is experiencing symptoms of hepatitis A, the food handler should be excluded from food handling immediately, should seek medical care, and should not return to food handling until 2 weeks after the beginning of the illness. Symptoms include sudden onset of fever, malaise, nausea, anorexia, and abdominal discomfort, followed in several days by jaundice.

Co-workers, who worked the same days and shifts of a food handler infected with hepatitis A, should not be allowed to handle food until they receive a shot of immune globulin (IG) to help prevent hepatitis A or show proof of previous infection or previous vaccination.