Common Foodborne Illnesses
**Staphylococcus**

**What Is It?**
- Bacteria that produces a toxin/poison, which is not destroyed by heat.
- On all healthy people’s skin.

**Symptoms:**
Sudden onset (1-8 hours) of severe nausea, cramps, vomiting and diarrhea followed by a quick recovery.

**Main Causes:**
- Open sores, cuts, burns and infections.
- Contamination from mucous in nose.
- Food held at improper temperatures.
- Inadequate hand washing.
- Food contaminated by food handler without subsequent cooking or with inadequate heating or refrigeration.

**Prevention:**
- Follow good hand washing practices
- Cover sores, cuts, burns with bandage and glove.
- Hold cold food at 41° F or lower.
- Hold hot food at 135 ° F or higher.
- Prepare the food on the day it is to be served, whenever possible.
What Is It?
- Bacteria commonly found in soil.
- Grows best in low oxygen conditions.
- Forms spores which allows them to survive in dormant state until exposed to conditions that support their growth.
- Produces a deadly toxin.

Symptoms:
Onset (6-36 hours) of dizziness, blurred vision, difficulty swallowing and breathing. Fatal if not medically treated.

Main Causes:
- Bulging, dented or damaged cans.
- Garlic in oil, sautéed vegetables, and baked potatoes held at improper temperatures.
- Honey given to infants.

Prevention:
- Do not use home canned foods.
- Do not use food from bulging, dented or damaged cans.
- Store in garlic and oil, sautéed vegetables, and baked potatoes at required temperatures. (<41º F or > 135º F)
- Do not feed honey to infants.
**Clostridium perfringens**

**What Is It?**
- Spore-forming bacteria that produces a toxin.
- Found in soil and intestines of humans and animals.
- Grows with little oxygen and high moisture.
- Many people mistake it for the “24-Hour Flu”.
- Commonly infected foods are stews, meat pies and gravies made of beef, turkey or chicken.

**Symptoms:**
Onset (10-12 hours) of severe abdominal pain, nausea and diarrhea.

**Main Causes:**
- Improper cooling of cooked potentially hazardous foods.
- Improper hot and cold holding of potentially hazardous foods.
- Preparing foods too far in advance of when they are being served.

**Prevention:**
- Cool food rapidly to 70°F within 2 hours, then to 41°F within 4 hours.
- Hold hot food at 135°F or higher
- Hold cold food at 41°F or lower.
- Reheat leftovers to 165°F or higher.
What Is It?
- Spore-forming bacteria.
- Can cause two distinct types of illnesses: 1) diarrheal illness with an incubation time of 4-16 hours and 2) emetic (vomiting) illness with an incubation time of 1-5 hours.
- Commonly found in soil, milk, cereals, grains and other dried foods.

Symptoms:
Onset (1-16 hours, depending on type of illness) of nausea and abdominal cramps with vomiting and diarrhea.

Main Causes:
- Improper cooling of cooked potentially hazardous food, especially cooked rice.
- Improper hot and cold holding of potentially hazardous foods.
- Improper reheating of leftovers.

Prevention:
- Cool food rapidly to 70°F within 2 hours, then to 41°F within 4 hours.
- Hold hot food at 135°F or higher
- Hold cold food at 41°F or lower.
- Reheat leftovers to 165°F or higher.

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**E.Coli**

**What Is It?**
- *Escherichia coli 0157:H7* is the most predominant cause of human infection.
- Bacteria commonly found in cattle.

**Symptoms:**
Onset (3-8 days) of severe abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, bloody stools and fever.

**Main Causes:**
- Raw or undercooked meat, especially ground beef.
- Unpasteurized milk, vegetable and fruit juices.
- Sprouts (bean and alfalfa).
- Inadequate hand washing.

**Prevention:**
- Cook meat to required temperatures; ground beef to 155º F or higher.
- Use pasteurized milk and juices.
- Wash and refrigerate sprouts.
- Follow good hand washing practices.
Salmonella

What Is It?
- Bacteria found mostly in raw chicken and raw eggs.
- Bacteria that is nonsporforming (killed by heat).

Symptoms:
Onset (12-36 hrs.) of abdominal cramps, vomiting, diarrhea and fever followed by several days of dehydration.

Main Causes:
- Undercooked poultry, egg and meat products.
- Cross-contamination from above food products
- Inadequate hand washing

Prevention:
- Cook poultry (165°F), egg (145°F) and meat products (varies) to required temperatures.
- Prevent cross contamination.
- Follow good hand washing practices.
- Cool food rapidly to 70°F within 2 hours, then to 41°F within an additional 4 hours.
- Use pasteurized egg and milk products.

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Campylobacter jejuni

What Is It?
- Bacteria commonly found in poultry.
- Grows best at the body temperature of a bird, and seems to be well adapted to birds that carry it without becoming ill.

Symptoms:
Onset (2-5 days) of severe diarrhea, cramping, abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting.

Main Causes:
- Undercooked meat (especially poultry).
- Unpasteurized dairy products.
- Inadequate hand washing after handling raw meat and before handling ready-to-eat foods.

Prevention:
- Cook meat and poultry to required temperatures.
- Avoid cross – contamination in the kitchen (wash, rinse and sanitize equipment after every use).
- Follow good hand washing practices.
- Cool food rapidly to 70° F within 2 hours, then to 41° F within 4 hours.
- Use pasteurized dairy products.

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Hepatitis A

What Is It?
- A serious liver disease caused by the Hepatitis A virus.
- Virus is found in the stool/feces of an infected person.
- Symptoms usually appear between 2-6 weeks after exposure.
- Virus is usually spread by the infected person 2 weeks before the symptoms appear, and lasts for up to 3 weeks.
- If you have had Hepatitis A, you are immune for life.
- There is usually a complete recovery from Hepatitis A.

Symptoms:
- Fever, fatigue, malaise, headache, abdominal discomfort, nausea, loss of appetite, dark urine and jaundice.

Main Causes:
- Failure to adequately wash hands after using the toilet.
- Ingestion of virus in water, shellfish, clams and oysters.
- Infected person handling ready-to-eat foods.
- Changing the diaper of an infected child.

Prevention:
- Follow good hand washing practices (soap, water and friction).
- Cook foods to required temperatures.
- Purchase shellfish from an approved source.

What is the Difference between Hepatitis A Vaccine and Immune Globulin?
Hepatitis A vaccine will provide long-term immunity but should be given before exposure. Two doses are needed for long-term immunity.

The Immune Globulin (IG) shot will prevent most people from getting Hepatitis A symptoms after being exposed. You must get vaccinated within 14 days after exposure. This will give you short term protection.

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Shigellosis

What Is It?
- Highly contagious, invasive infection of the intestines caused by Shigella bacteria.
- Commonly caused by fecal-oral spread.
- Most cases occur in children 1-4 years old.

Symptoms:
Onset (1-7 days, avg. 4 days) of diarrhea, fever, abdominal pain, blood in stool, headache, vomiting and dehydration.

Main Causes:
- Unpasteurized milk and milk products.
- Not washing hands after using the toilet.
- Drinking untreated water or using untreated water in food.

Prevention:
- Practice good personal hygiene.
- Protect and treat water.
- Use only pasteurized milk.
- Cool hot foods rapidly (135° F – 70° F in 2 hrs, and then 70° F – 41° F in 4 hrs.)

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