

Food Poisoning

Definition:

Food poisoning is a sickness caused by poisonous or contaminated food.

Signs & Symptoms:

- Abdominal cramps and pain
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Sudden diarrhea that can last for two or three days
- Fever and chills
- Dehydration

Treatment:

- You can treat at home the small episodes of vomiting and diarrhea that last less than 24 hours.
- If you have symptoms of nausea or vomiting, it's advised to drink plenty of fluids instead of eating solid food.
- Hydration is very essential; therefore one should consume small but regular sips of liquid.
- Avoid caffeinated, alcoholic or sugary drinks.
- Oral hydration bottles made for children are advised.
- Energy drinks can be consumed only if diluted with water.
- Eating solid food should start gradually after effectively tolerating fluids.
- Eat wheat bread, boiled rice, baked or boiled potato and cereals.
- Milk can be provided safely; however, some people may have additional stomach pain due to lactose intolerance.
- Medicine to stop the diarrhea is not recommended, but it can be given if requested by your physician.

Safety Precautions:

Kindly follow the below instructions in order to prevent food poisoning:

Safe Shopping

- Buy cold foods at the end of your shopping trip.
- Avoid buying tattered or leaking products.
- Avoid cross contamination by separating raw meat and chicken from other foods.

Safe Storage

- Refrigerate food immediately.
- Use the coldest area of the refrigerator to store raw meat, fish and chicken.
- Check the temperature of the refrigerator on a regular basis.
- Freeze or cook fresh meat or meat products within two days of purchase.

Safe Food Preparation

- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling food, after cutting meats as well as after using the cutting board or knives
- Sanitize cutting boards and surfaces.
- Keep raw meat, chicken and fish away from other foods to avoid cross-contamination.
- Place chicken and meat in a covered container in the fridge and throw away any uncovered dish.
- Thaw frozen foods slowly in the refrigerator and make sure the defrosting liquid is not oozing onto other foods.
- Put food in a leak-proof bag and immerse in cold water for a quicker defrosting.
- If you defrost food via the Microwave, make sure to cook it immediately.

Safe Cooking

- Use a thermometer to check food temperature.
- Cook meat to 160°F and chicken to 165°F.
- Do not leave food out for more than two hours.
- Microbes causing food poisoning develop rapidly at room temperature.
- Use cooked leftover foods within three days only.

