



## HEALTH INFORMATION

# Food Poisoning

## What is food poisoning?

food poisoning is where food has been contaminated by bacteria or chemicals, vomiting is the main symptom. In these cases, vomiting can occur 15 minutes to six hours after eating the food.

## Symptoms

The most common symptoms are:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Stomach cramps
- Abdominal pain
- Loss of appetite
- High temperature
- Muscle pain
- Chills

## Treatment

Most people with food poisoning get better without the need for treatment.

To help relieve your symptoms you should rest and drink plenty of fluids. It is best to avoid food until you feel much better. When you start eating again, choose foods that are easily digested, such as toast.

It's important that you do not become dehydrated because it will make you feel worse and lengthen your recovery.

Try to drink as much water as you can, even if you can only sip it, particularly every time you pass diarrhoea.

Most cases of food poisoning do not require medical treatment. However, you should seek medical advice if you have any of the following signs or symptoms:

- Ongoing symptoms of vomiting that lasts more than two days
- You are unable to keep liquids down for more than a day
- Diarrhoea that lasts for more than three days

- Blood in your vomit
- Blood in your stools
- Seizures (fits)
- Changes in your mental state, such as confusion
- Double vision
- Slurred speech
- Signs of severe dehydration, such as a dry mouth, sunken eyes and an inability to pass urine, or passing small amounts of dark, strong-smelling urine
- If you are pregnant

## Is it contagious?

Some types of food poisoning are contagious.

Food poisoning is caused by eating food contaminated with bacteria, viruses, or parasites. However, if you have food poisoning it is possible to pass those germs to someone else. Some of the most common types that are contagious are salmonella, E. coli, and norovirus. When you have food poisoning, your vomit and faeces are full of these germs. It's very important to disinfect areas that may be contaminated. Food poisoning caused by bacteria in the food – usually from spoiled food that has been left at room temperature too long. This is a less common type of food poisoning, but it's not contagious from one person to another. You can get it only from eating the contaminated food. Since you may not know exactly which type of food poisoning you have, it's always best to be cautious.

Fully disinfect any contaminated areas just in case.