

Summary

Food poisoning, also called food-borne illness, caused by eating contaminated food. Infectious organisms including various bacteria, viruses and parasites or their toxins are the most common causes of food poisoning. Infectious organisms or their toxins can contaminate food at any point during its processing or production. Contamination can also occur at home if food is incorrectly handled or cooked. Food poisoning symptoms often include nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, which can start just hours after eating contaminated food. Most often, food poisoning is mild and resolves without treatment. But some cases are severe, requiring hospitalization.

More than 250 known diseases can be transmitted through food. The estimates unknown or undiscovered agents cause 68% of all food-borne illnesses and related hospitalizations. Many cases of food poisoning are not reported because people suffer mild symptoms and recover quickly. Also, doctors do not test for a cause in every suspected case because it does not change the treatment or the outcome.

Food poisoning is a common problem that affects millions of people in the world including India in each year. Most cases of food poisoning resolve on their own. Prevention is key and depends upon keeping food preparation areas clean, good hand washing, and cooking foods thoroughly. Food poisoning is the name for the range of illnesses caused by eating or drinking contaminated food or drink. It is also sometimes called food borne illness. When dealing with food we must remember and practice the old age saying “when in doubt throw it out”.