

## **Causes of Food Poisoning**

Bacteria, viruses and other substances can taint meat and cause food poisoning in anyone who consumes it. Most commonly, the problem is a form of bacteria, such as salmonella, Clostridium perfringens or E. coli. Bacteria often are found on raw meat, but food poisoning generally can be avoided if you prevent the number of bacteria from growing through cooking and avoid re-contaminating meat by accidentally spreading bacteria.

## **Symptoms and Signs**

The most common symptoms of food poisoning induced by bad meat include stomach cramps, nausea, diarrhea and vomiting. Other symptoms include chills, headache, fever and blood in the stool. The specific signs can vary, depending on the specific cause of the meat contamination. For example, eating meat contaminated with E. coli can cause a case of diarrhea in which there is a lot of blood but not much stool. Eating meat with botulism can result in problems with speaking or swallowing. It also can trigger a case of paralysis that spreads throughout the body, affecting your ability to breathe and potentially causing respiratory failure. Other signs of meat food poisoning may include body aches and vision problems, such as seeing double or a sensitivity to light. Symptoms may surface anywhere from 30 minutes to four weeks after eating contaminated meat, but they usually show up within 12 to 72 hours.

## **Treatment**

Typically, a person with food poisoning does not need medical attention, but there are exceptions. You should seek immediate medical care if you experience severe symptoms, including vomiting that lasts for more than 12 hours or problems with breathing. A health care provider can prescribe drugs, such as antibiotics, or pump the toxins out of your stomach if necessary.

For milder instances of food poisoning, including cases caused by bad meat, a crucial part of the treatment is to stay hydrated. Drink water and other beverages to help eliminate toxins and to replace lost fluids and electrolytes. You can also take over-the-counter medications that are specifically formulated to ease the discomfort of diarrhea and an upset stomach.

## **When to Seek Medical Care**

Contact your doctor if any of the following situations occur:

- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea lasts for more than two days.
- The ill person is a child younger than three years of age.
- The abdominal symptoms are associated with a low-grade fever.
- Symptoms begin after recent foreign travel.
- Other family members or friends who ate the same thing are also sick.
- The ill person cannot keep any liquids down.
- The ill person does not improve within two days even though they are drinking large amounts of fluids.

- The ill person has a disease or illness that weakens their immune system (for example, HIV/AIDS, cancer and undergoing chemotherapy, kidney disease).
- The ill person cannot take their normal prescribed medications because of vomiting.
- The ill person has any nervous system symptoms such as slurred speech, muscle weakness, double vision, or difficulty swallowing.
- The ill person is pregnant.

Go to the nearest hospital's emergency department if any of the following situations occur:

- The ill person passes out or collapse, become dizzy, lightheaded, or has problems with vision.
- A fever higher than 101 F (38.3 C) occurs with the abdominal symptoms.
- Sharp or cramping pains do not go away after 10-15 minutes.
- The ill person's stomach or abdomen swells.
- The skin and/or eyes turn yellow.
- The ill person is vomiting blood or having bloody bowel movements.
- The ill person stops urinating, have decreased urination, or have urine that is dark in color.
- The ill person develops problems with breathing, speaking, or swallowing.
- One or more joints swell or a rash breaks out on the ill person's skin.
- The ill person or caretaker considers the situation to be an emergency.

Dairy:

### **Signs of Spoiled Yogurt**

- Check the expiration date. This can give you a good idea, but not a guarantee, if it has spoiled or not.
- Look for visual clues such as mold or fungus. You may see white, brown or green fuzzy spots in your yogurt. These are surefire indicators that your yogurt is spoiled. Don't try to pick these out or eat around it, as there are likely bits not yet visible to the eye.
- Smell it. Yogurt generally has a rancid smell when it first begins to go. It may remind you of soured milk and might have a bit of an unusually runny consistency.

### **Signs of Spoiled Milk**

- Use the milk's "Sell By" date as a guide post. All milk is required by law to have a date stamped on the packaging informing the buyer when this jug has to be sold by. According to experts, milk will last two to three days beyond this date. Many companies also provide a "Use By" date as well. However, due to certain circumstances milk may go bad before these dates.
- Open the milk container and smell inside the bottle. Fresh milk will have almost no scent at all, and any odor is usually smooth and pleasant. However, if your milk is spoiling, it will have a tangy, unpleasant scent.
- Inspect the milk's color. If the milk is any color besides pure white, it may be spoiled. In many cases spoiled milk will take on a yellow or dark shade.

- Look at the milk's texture when you pour it. If you think the color is off or if the milk has a thicker, yogurt texture, it may be spoiled. Also if the milk has the appearance of chunky cottage cheese when you pour it, the milk is spoiled