



## General Guidelines for Food Associated Illness\*

### Ordered by Incubation Time

Agent	Incubation	Duration	Diarrhea	Bloody	Vomit	Fever	Other	Common Exposures
Metals	<2hrs	<1d	rare		freq	none	cramps	Acid foods/drink, tomato and lemon juice
MSG	<2hrs	<1d	rare		occ	none	headache, burning	Chinese foods
scombroid (histamine)	<2hrs	<12hrs	occ		occ	none	burning, flushing	Tuna, bonito, mahi mahi
PSP <sup>6</sup>	<4hrs	<1-3d	occ		occ	none	neurologic	Toxic shellfish
<i>Staph aureus</i> (toxin) <sup>1,4</sup>	0.5-8hrs	<1d	occ		freq	none	cramps	Ready-to-eat foods, pastries, meat, leftovers, salads
<i>Bacillus cereus</i> (emetic toxin) <sup>1,4</sup>	1-6hrs	<1d	occ		freq	none		Fried rice, dried foods, soup, gravy, vegetables
<i>Bacillus cereus</i> (enterotoxin) <sup>1,4</sup>	6-24hrs	<1d	freq		occ	none	cramps	Meats, stews, gravy, sauces
<i>Clostridium perfringens</i> <sup>1,4</sup>	6-24hrs	≤1d	freq		rare	none	cramps	Meats, stews, gravy
<i>Vibrio parahemolyticus</i> <sup>2,4</sup>	4-30 hrs	1-7d	freq	rare	occ	occ	cramps, headache	Raw/undercooked seafood, contaminated water
Botulism (ingested toxin) <sup>1,4,5</sup>	12hrs-1.5d	long	rare		rare	none	neurologic	Home-canned/preserved produce, fermented fish
Norovirus-type agents <sup>1,7</sup>	12hrs-2d	1-2d	freq		freq	mild	aching, headache	Human fecal-oral (ready-to-eat foods), shellfish
Salmonella <sup>2,4</sup>	12hrs-5d	3-7d	freq	occ	occ	freq	cramps	Poultry, meat, raw milk, eggs, reptiles, cows, human fecal-oral
Shigella <sup>2,4</sup>	1-7d	4-7d	freq	occ	occ	freq	cramps	Human fecal-oral (ready-to-eat foods)
<i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 (EHEC) <sup>2,4</sup>	1-8d	5-10d	freq	freq	occ	rare	cramps, HUS	Beef, raw milk, unpasteurized juice, sprouts, cows
<i>Campylobacter jejuni</i> <sup>2,4</sup>	1-10d	2-5d	freq	occ	occ	freq	cramps	Poultry, raw milk, pets/animals, meat
<i>Yersinia enterocolitica</i> <sup>2,4</sup>	3-10d	1-3w	freq	occ	occ	freq	headache	Chitterlings, pork, raw milk, human fecal-oral
Cryptosporidium <sup>3</sup>	1-12d	2w+	freq		occ	occ	varied	Water, human fecal-oral
Cyclospora <sup>3</sup>	1-14d	9-43d	freq		none	rare	weight loss	Water, raspberries, basil, lettuce
Giardia <sup>3</sup>	3-25d	1-4w	freq		none	none	greasy stool, wt loss	Water, human fecal-oral
<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> <sup>4</sup>	3-70d	varies	none		occ	freq	sepsis, meningitis	Raw dairy, soft cheese, deli foods, processed meat/fish
Hepatitis A <sup>5</sup>	15-50d	1-2w+	rare		occ	freq	jaundice, fatigue	Human fecal-oral, ready-to-eat foods

freq = frequently    occ = occasionally    d = day    w = week    hrs = hours

<sup>1</sup> whole stool in sterile container; <sup>2</sup> Cary Blair transport medium; <sup>3</sup> O&P kit; <sup>4</sup> food; <sup>5</sup> blood or serum; <sup>6</sup> stomach contents; <sup>7</sup> vomit

\*These are only guidelines. Patients affected by the above agents may have incubation periods, durations and symptoms outside of the ranges listed.