



# **Food Poisoning**

## ***Prevention is Better than Cure***

**2008**  
**24 minutes**

Teacher Notes:

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### **Program Synopsis**

So what is food poisoning? Another name is food borne illness. This illness generally results from consuming food or drink contaminated with pathogenic bacteria, viruses or toxins. It often produces symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, diarrhoea and fever. The symptoms are often the same as gastro-type illnesses caused by other sources (eg other people carrying the bacteria, unhygienic surfaces). This makes it difficult to distinguish between illnesses caused by food contamination from illness caused by other sources.

### **Related Programs**

- Dying for a Meal – All About Food Poisoning
- HACCP in Action – Food Safety Case Studies
- Buying and Storing Food Safely with Helen Highwaters

### **Introduction**

Food borne illness can occur from any fresh or processed foods consumed in a range of settings such as homes, restaurants, large catering establishments, schools and institutions. Most cases of food borne illness can be avoided through proper hygiene and appropriate food handling practices. This program explores food poisoning, its causes, and the best methods for prevention.

### **Program Rationale**

There are many ways that food poisoning can occur and being aware of the causes is an important step to prevention. Understanding that there are different types of food poisoning can increase our awareness of the safety issues concerning the purchase and use of food. This program demonstrates ways we can become more conscious of the issues and consequences of food poisoning.

### **Program Timeline**

00:00:00	Introduction
00:00:27	Chapter 1 - Food poisoning and contamination
00:05:01	Chapter 2 - Sources of food contamination
00:12:21	Chapter 3 - Sources of food contamination (chemical/physical)
00:16:42	Chapter 4 - Other ways food can cause illness
00:19:07	Chapter 5 - Preventing food poisoning
00:22:08	Conclusion
00:22:59	Credits
00:24:16	End Program

**Program Worksheet**

**Before the Program**

1. Ask your students if they have experienced, or know someone who has experienced, a bout of food poisoning? What did they have and what was the outcome?
2. Investigate media articles and websites for recent incidents of food poisoning.
3. Research your school's or workplace's policies and procedures for serving, preparing and selling foods that can minimise the occurrence of food poisoning. Discuss the reasons for having these policies and procedures, and the implications of not having them in place.
4. Explore a number of websites relating to food safety, include the Food Standards Code and state/country based health department websites.

**During the Program**

1. What is food poisoning?

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2. What are the main sources of food poisoning?

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3. How can you tell if food has been spoilt?

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4. What is the incubation period?

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5. What are the typical symptoms of food poisoning?

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6. Who is more at risk of food poisoning? Why?

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7. How many people were killed in the Melbourne nursing home?

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8. What are the main microbes associated with food poisoning?

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**Food Poisoning:**  
Prevention is Better Than Cure

9. Which type of microbe is the main food poisoner?

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10. List the major bacterial food poisoners.

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11. What is the ideal temperature range for bacterial growth?

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12. List examples of chemical contaminants in food.

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13. List examples of physical contaminants in food.

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14. List a number of sources of environmental contamination.

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15. List a number of other ways people can be poisoned by food.

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16. What causes a food allergy?

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17. What are some symptoms of an allergic reaction to food?

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18. What is anaphylaxis?

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19. List the main food allergens? ( also refer to the Food Standards Code )

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20. What are some of the practices you can follow to prevent food poisoning?

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**After the Program**

1. Select at least one pathogenic bacterium and: identify its origin, explain how it penetrates food, the most conducive conditions for growth, typical symptoms, safe levels for consumption, as well as methods of preservation and destruction.
2. Investigate sources of chemical contamination in food. For example agricultural run-off into rivers or incorrect cleaning practices.
3. Investigate sources of physical contaminants within food such as naturally occurring sticks, stalks, stones, dead insects, glass, metal and wood.
4. Examine other sources of food poisoning such as: green potatoes, rhubarb, mushrooms, puffer fish (Fugu) and naturally occurring toxins.
5. Explore the topic of organic food. Definitions, origins, food in the marketplace and consumer acceptance. Is it chemical free?
6. Investigate the legal requirements to make food safe. For example, food safety programs and HACCP.
7. Investigate the policies and procedures at your school or workplace relating to serving, preparing and selling foods that contain allergens. Discuss these policies and procedures, including the implications of not having them in place.
8. Examine the topic of allergens: what are they, where are they found, what are the symptoms, who is affected, what are the methods for control of an allergic reaction and what are the issues for food labelling?