

Preventing Foodborne Diseases

Infectious diseases spread through food or beverage are a common, and sometimes life-threatening problem for millions of people. The CDC estimates that 76 million people suffer foodborne illnesses each year in the U.S. 325,000 of those people are hospitalized and more than 5,000 die from their illness.

Costly diseases

Health experts estimate that the yearly cost of all foodborne diseases in the U.S. is between \$5 to \$6 billion in direct medical expenses and lost productivity. The biggest culprit is Salmonella, which alone accounts for \$1 billion in direct and indirect medical costs .

Hundreds of diseases

There are more than 250 known foodborne diseases. Bacteria cause the most cases, followed by viruses and parasites. Natural and manufactured chemicals in food products can also make people sick. While some people infected with foodborne germs may have no symptoms, others may develop symptoms ranging from mild stomach discomfort to severe dehydration and bloody diarrhea.

Five of the most common foodborne diseases caused by bacteria are listed below:

- **Botulism**
- **Campylobacteriosis**
- **Esherichiacoli (E. coli)**
- **Salmonellosis**
- **Shigellosis**

Preventing the spread of diseases

Many times, foodborne diseases are easy to avoid. There are some basic steps you can take to prevent yourself and your customers from getting infected by most foodborne illnesses.

- **Wash your hands carefully before preparing food.**
- **Wash hands, utensils, and kitchen surfaces with hot soapy water after they touch raw meat or poultry.**
- **Cook beef and beef products thoroughly, especially hamburger.**
- **Cook poultry and eggs thoroughly.**
- **Eat cooked food promptly and refrigerate leftovers within two hours after cooking.**
- **Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly, especially those that will be eaten raw.**
- **Drink only pasteurized milk and juices and treated surface water.**
- **Wash hands carefully after using the bathroom, changing infant diapers, or cleaning up animal feces.**

For more information and additional risk management and prevention tools, visit: fwcruminsurance.com