

Bacillus Cereus

Found mainly in cereals, Bacillus cereus can cause two types of food poisoning.

WHAT IS IT?

Bacillus cereus is a type of bacteria commonly found in soil. Forming spores, the bacteria multiply quickly in cereal foods that have been boiled briefly and then stored between 5°C and 60°C.

FOOD POISONING

Bacillus cereus food poisoning may occur from eating food that has been stored at room temperature after cooking. Cereal and cornflour products, boiled and fried rice, spices, custards and occasionally curries have been associated with this type of food poisoning.

THE SYMPTOMS

The bacteria cause two types of illness. In rice products it produces a toxin that causes vomiting and stomach cramps, two to seven hours after eating the contaminated food. In cornflour or spicy food, the bacteria causes abdominal pain and diarrhoea, six to twenty four hours after eating the contaminated food.

HOW TO AVOID FOOD POISONING

- Foods should not be stored at room temperature after cooking. Bacillus cereus spores can survive boiling temperature and multiply rapidly at room temperature.
- Refrigerate leftover food as soon as possible after cooking.
- Ensure that leftover food is reheated rapidly and thoroughly.
- Ensure that hot foods are kept above 60°C and cold foods below 5°C.
- Keep all kitchen surfaces and equipment clean.
- As a routine practice, clean all bench tops, cutting boards and utensils with detergent and follow up with a sanitiser (which kills bacteria) such as hot water or a chemical sanitiser.
- Food handlers are required to report to their supervisor if they have symptoms, or know that they are a carrier of a food borne illness. Such persons are obliged not to handle food until they are recovered or, if a carrier, free of the organism of concern.

SEE ALSO

- Food poisoning - General Information
- Food poisoning - Campylobacter
- Food poisoning - Clostridium botulinum
- Food poisoning - Clostridium perfringens
- Food poisoning - Escherichia coli (E.coli)
- Food poisoning - Staphylococcus
- Food poisoning - Listeria monocytogenes
- Food poisoning - Salmonella

CONTACT DETAILS

Environmental Health Team

T (08) 8375 6600

F (08) 8375 6699

E council@marion.sa.gov.au

PO Box 21 Oaklands Park SA 5046

245 Sturt Road Sturt SA 5047

marion.sa.gov.au