

FOODBORNE OUTBREAKS

The BC Centre for Disease Control is responsible for the surveillance, monitoring and response to foodborne outbreaks in British Columbia.

An outbreak occurs when multiple people get sick from the same source – this may be eating the same contaminated food item or doing the same activity such as visiting a petting zoo.

When an outbreak is detected, an investigation will take place in order to:

- Identify the source of the illness
- Control the source to prevent additional illnesses
- Make recommendations to prevent a similar outbreak from happening in the future

Investigations are often led by epidemiologists who study how and why diseases occur in certain groups of people, and who work to control the spread of disease.



OUTBREAK INVESTIGATIONS REQUIRE THE EXPERTISE OF:



PUBLIC HEALTH
gather case information and identify a source



FOOD SAFETY
identify the origin of the source



LABORATORY
test human, food, and environmental samples



MOST COMMON OUTBREAK MICROBES

Salmonella

INCUBATION PERIOD	12 hours to 7 days after eating contaminated food
SYMPTOMS	stomach cramps, diarrhea, fever, nausea, vomiting
DURATION OF ILLNESS	4 to 7 days
RECENT OUTBREAKS HAVE BEEN LINKED TO	chicken nuggets, eggs, reptiles, baby chicks, raw pet food

Norovirus

INCUBATION PERIOD	12 hours to 2 days after eating contaminated food
SYMPTOMS	nausea, cramps, chills, fever, vomiting, diarrhea
DURATION OF ILLNESS	1 to 2 days
RECENT OUTBREAKS HAVE BEEN LINKED TO	raw oysters, contact with a person with norovirus, eating foods prepared by a person with norovirus

E. coli

INCUBATION PERIOD	2 to 10 days after eating contaminated food
SYMPTOMS	watery diarrhea, stomach cramps, bloody diarrhea. Can lead to <i>hemolytic uremic syndrome</i> , a condition that affects the blood and can lead to kidney failure
DURATION OF ILLNESS	5 to 10 days
RECENT OUTBREAKS HAVE BEEN LINKED TO	flour, unpasteurized cheese, beef, leafy greens

550,000

CASES OF DOMESTICALLY-ACQUIRED
FOODBORNE ILLNESS OCCUR IN B.C.
EACH YEAR

1:347



FOR EVERY 347
PEOPLE THAT
GET SICK WITH
DIARRHEA,
ONLY ONE GETS
REPORTED TO
PUBLIC HEALTH
OFFICIALS



5-10

OUTBREAKS ARE
INVESTIGATED BY BCCDC
EPIDEMIOLOGISTS EACH
YEAR



60%

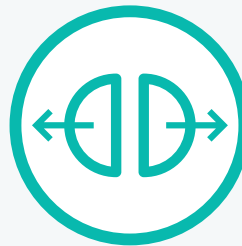
OF OUTBREAKS ARE
SOLVED AND THE
FOOD SOURCE IS
IDENTIFIED

FOOD SAFETY TIPS



CLEAN

WASH YOUR HANDS
AND SURFACES OFTEN



SEPARATE

SEPARATE DISHES
AND UTENSILS USED
FOR RAW AND
COOKED MEATS AND
POULTRY



COOK

COOK ALL FOODS,
PARTICULARLY
MEATS AND
POULTRY
THOROUGHLY



CHILL

KEEP PERISHABLE
FOODS COLD

OTHER ROUTES OF TRANSMISSION



WATERBORNE

Swallowing water
contaminated with
microbes



ZOONOTIC

Contact with animals that
carry the microbes, such
as *Salmonella* in chicken
or *E. coli* in cattle



PERSON-TO-PERSON

Close contact with an ill
person via unclean hands
or changing diapers, for
example