
ServSafe
National Restaurant Association
Registered ServSafe Proctor
& Certified ServSafe Instructor
Chapter 1
ServSafe® Course Review

LEGAL NOTICE

The information contained in this study guide is intended to contain enough information for a food service manager/operator to pass the ServSafe® Nationally Accredited Food Safety Exam. It is based on the instructors notes and talking points, which are based on the ServSafe® Essentials 7th Edition reference book.

Under no circumstance is what is written herein and following intended to be a legal, regulatory, operating or reference of any form or kind, or to provide a definitive guide to food safety and service.

The information contained herein does not outline the entire FDA Food Code and food service operators should seek proper legal advice and services, which is not found within these notes. We have been careful to provide accurate information, by use of this learning tool you agree that we are not responsible or liable for any damage or loss incurred resulting from any inaccuracies or omissions in this document.

If you and/or your operation establish any policies, or follow any procedures based on the notes contained herein, you do so at your own risk.

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1 Providing Safe Food

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Providing Safe Food

Objectives:

By the end of this chapter, you should be able to identify the following:

- What a foodborne illness is and when a foodborne-illness outbreak has occurred
- TCS and ready-to-eat food
- The five risk factors for foodborne illness
- The populations that have a higher risk for foodborne illness
- Ways to keep food safe
- The roles of government agencies in keeping food safe

Challenges to Food Safety

A foodborne illness is a disease transmitted to people through food.

An illness is considered an outbreak when:

- Two or more people have the same symptoms after eating the same food.
- An investigation is conducted by state and local regulatory authorities.
- The outbreak is confirmed by laboratory analysis.

Challenges to Food Safety

Challenges include:

- Time
- Language and culture
- Literacy and education
- Pathogens
- Unapproved suppliers
- High-risk customers
- Staff turnover

Challenges to Food Safety

Pressure to work quickly can make it hard to take the time to follow food safety practices.

Your staff may speak a different language than you do, which can make it difficult to communicate. Cultural differences can also influence how food handlers view food safety.

Staff often have different levels of education, making it more challenging to teach them food safety.

Illness-causing microorganisms are more frequently found on food that once was considered safe.

Food that is received from suppliers that are not practicing food safety can cause a foodborne-illness outbreak.

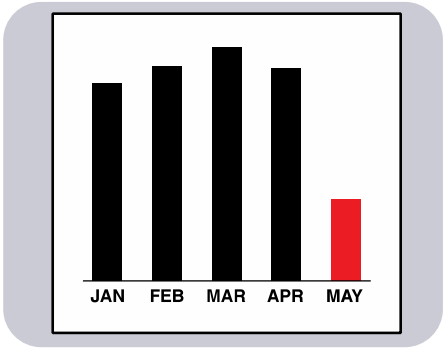
The number of customers at high risk for getting a foodborne illness is increasing. An example of this is the growing elderly population.

Training new staff leaves less time for food safety training.

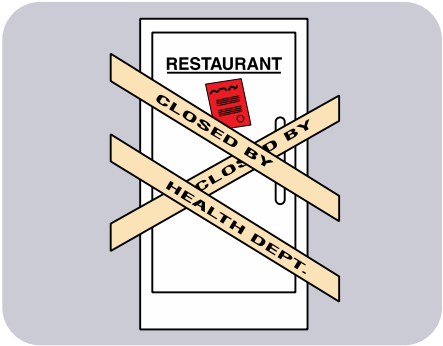
The ServSafe® program will provide the tools needed to overcome the challenges in managing a good food safety program.

Costs of Foodborne Illness

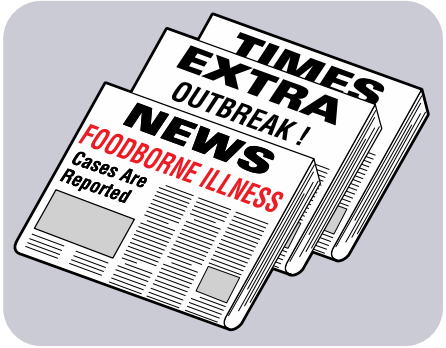
Costs of a foodborne illness to an operation:



Loss of customers and sales



Loss of reputation

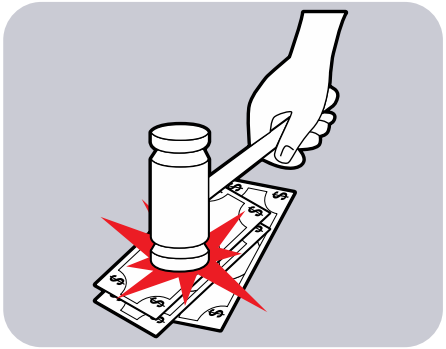


Negative media exposure

Lowered staff morale

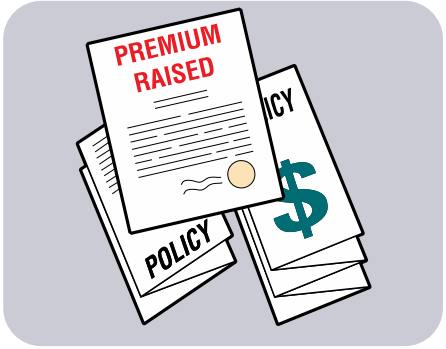
Costs of Foodborne Illness

Costs of a foodborne illness to an operation:



Lawsuits and legal fees

Staff missing work



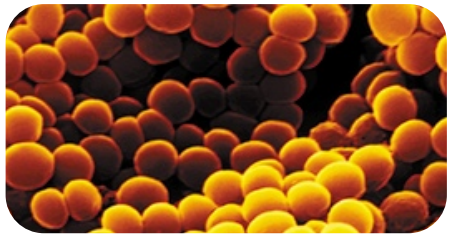
Increased insurance premiums

Staff retraining

How Foodborne Illnesses Occur

Unsafe food is the result of contamination:

- Biological
- Chemical
- Physical

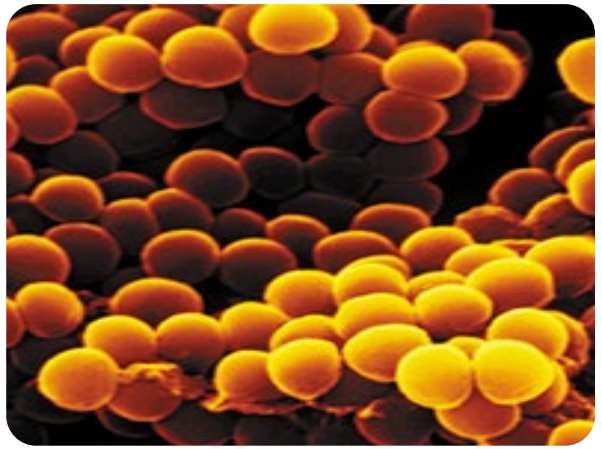


- **Unsafe food is usually the result of contamination, which is the presence of harmful substances in the food.**
- **Contaminants can come from pathogens, chemicals, or physical objects. They might also come from certain unsafe practices in your operation.**
- **Each of the contaminants listed here is a danger to food safety. But biological contaminants are responsible for most foodborne illness.**

Contaminants

Biological contaminants:

- Bacteria
- Viruses
- Parasites
- Fungi



Pathogens (germs that can cause disease) are the greatest threat to food safety. They include certain viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Some plants, mushrooms, and seafood that carry harmful toxins (poisons) are also included in this group.

Contaminants

Chemical contaminants:

- Cleaners
- Sanitizers
- Polishes

Foodservice chemicals can contaminate food if they are used incorrectly.

Contaminants

Physical hazards:

- Metal shavings
- Staples
- Bandages
- Glass
- Dirt
- Natural objects (e.g., fish bones in a fillet)

How Food Becomes Unsafe

If food is not handled correctly, it can become unsafe. These are the five most common food-handling mistakes, or risk factors, that can cause foodborne illness. Purchasing food from unsafe sources can be a big problem. So, purchasing food from approved, reputable suppliers is critical.
Keep in mind that food prepared in a private home is also considered to be from an unsafe source and must be avoided.

Five risk factors for foodborne illness:

1. Purchasing food from unsafe sources.
2. Failing to cook food correctly.
3. Holding food at incorrect temperatures.
4. Using contaminated equipment.
5. Practicing poor personal hygiene.

How Food Becomes Unsafe

Time-temperature abuse

Cross-contamination

Poor personal hygiene

Poor cleaning and sanitizing

Except for purchasing food from unsafe sources, each risk factor for foodborne illness is related to four main practices: time-temperature abuse, cross-contamination, poor personal hygiene, and poor cleaning and sanitizing.

How Food Becomes Unsafe

Time-temperature abuse:

- When food has stayed too long at temperatures good for pathogen growth

How Food Becomes Unsafe

Food has been time-temperature abused when:

- It has not been held or stored at the correct temperature.
- It is not cooked or reheated enough to kill pathogens.
- It is not cooled correctly.

How Food Becomes Unsafe

Cross-contamination:

- When pathogens are transferred from one surface or food to another

How Food Becomes Unsafe

Cross-contamination can cause a foodborne illness when:

- Contaminated ingredients are added to food that receives no further cooking
- Ready-to-eat food touches contaminated surfaces.
- Contaminated food touches or drips fluids onto cooked or ready-to-eat food.
- A food handler touches contaminated food and then touches ready-to-eat food.
- Contaminated wiping cloths touch food-contact surfaces.

How Food Becomes Unsafe

Poor personal hygiene can cause a foodborne illness when food handlers:

- Fail to wash their hands correctly after using the restroom
- Cough or sneeze on food
- Touch or scratch wounds and then touch food
- Work while sick

How Food Becomes Unsafe

Poor cleaning and sanitizing can spread pathogens from equipment to food when:

- Equipment and utensils are not washed, rinsed, and sanitized between uses.
- Food contact surfaces are wiped clean instead of being washed, rinsed, and sanitized.
- Wiping cloths are not stored in a sanitizer solution between uses.
- Sanitizing solutions are not at the required levels.

Pathogens can be spread to food if equipment has not been cleaned and sanitized correctly between uses.

Food Most Likely to Become Unsafe

The two types of food that are most likely to become unsafe:

- TCS food
- Ready-to-eat food

TCS FOOD

READY-TO-EAT FOOD

Food Most Likely to Become Unsafe

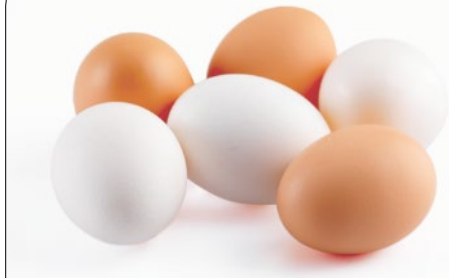
TCS food:

- Food requiring time and temperature control to limit pathogen growth—"Time and Temperature Control for Safety" food.
- One T with a double meaning: Time and Temperature

Food Most Likely to Become Unsafe

TCS food:

Milk and dairy products



Shell eggs

Meat: beef, pork, and lamb

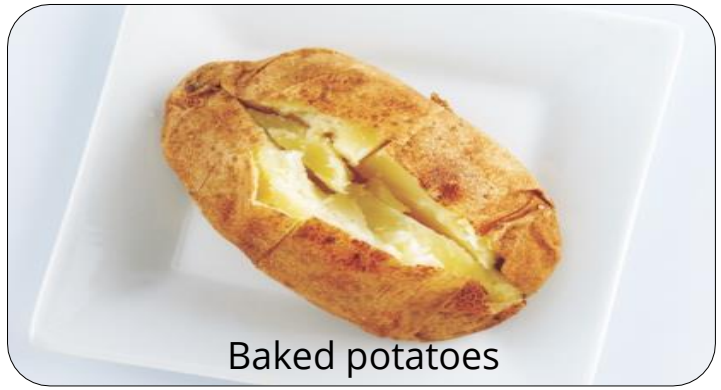
Poultry

Fish

Shellfish and crustaceans

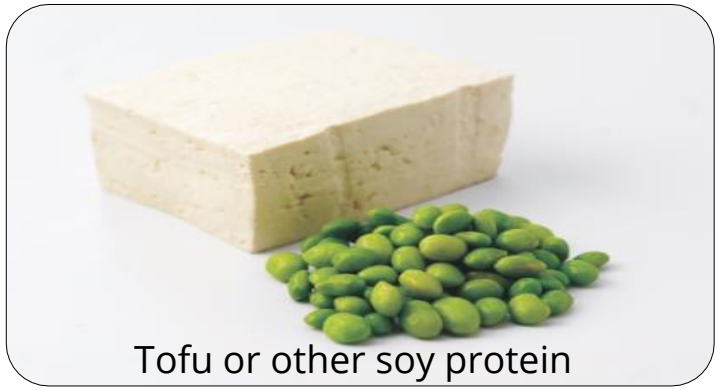
Food Most Likely to Become Unsafe

TCS food:



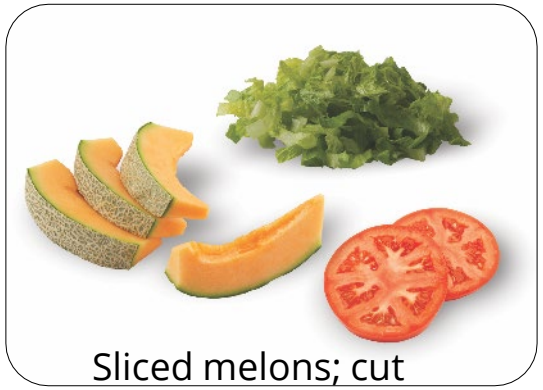
Baked potatoes

Heat-treated plant food, such as cooked rice, beans, and vegetables



Tofu or other soy protein

Sprouts and sprout seeds



Sliced melons; cut tomatoes; cut leafy greens

Untreated garlic-and-oil mixtures

Food Most Likely to Become Unsafe

Ready-to-eat food is food that can be eaten without further:

- Preparation
- Washing
- Cooking

Ready-to-eat food includes:

- Cooked food
- Washed fruit and vegetables
- Deli meat
- Bakery items
- Sugar, spices, and seasonings

Like TCS food, ready-to-eat food also needs careful handling to prevent contamination.

Populations at High Risk for Foodborne Illnesses

These people have a higher risk of getting a foodborne illness:

- Elderly people
- Preschool-age children
- People with compromised immune systems

Elderly people are at high risk because their immune systems weaken with age.

The immune system is the body's defense against illness.

Very young children are at high risk because they have not built up strong immune systems.

People with compromised immune systems include those who have certain medical conditions or are on certain medications:

- People with cancer or on chemotherapy
- People with HIV/AIDS
- Transplant recipients

Keeping Food Safe

Set up standard operating procedures that focus on these areas.

Focus on these measures:

- Purchasing from approved, reputable suppliers
- Controlling time and temperature
- Preventing cross-contamination
- Practicing personal hygiene
- Cleaning and sanitizing

Keeping Food Safe

Training and monitoring:

- Train staff to follow food safety procedures.
- Provide initial and ongoing training.
- Provide all staff with general food safety knowledge.
- Provide job-specific, food safety training.
- Retrain staff regularly.
- Document training.

Keeping Food Safe

Training and monitoring:

- Monitor staff to make sure they are following procedures.
- If a task is done incorrectly, take corrective action immediately.
- Retrain an employee or multiple employees if they often complete a task incorrectly.

After staff are trained, managers must monitor them to make sure the procedures are followed.
Each incorrect task could lead to an increase in risk. When this happens, correct the situation immediately. This is called corrective action.
If an employee often completes a task incorrectly or if multiple employees complete a task incorrectly, they should be retrained.

Keeping Food Safe

The Person in Charge must:

- Be a Certified Food Protection Manager
- Be onsite during operating hours
- Show that they have the required knowledge

Staff aren't the only ones who need training to keep food safe. The FDA Food Code requires the person in charge of a foodservice operation become a certified food protection manager. That comes with a few requirements. First, managers must be onsite at all times during operating hours *and* be able to show that they have the required knowledge.

To become a Certified Food Protection Manager:

- You must pass a test from an accredited program
- The program must be accredited by an agency approved by a Conference for Food Protection
- Completing this course and passing the ServSafe exam meets this requirement

To become a certified food protection manager you must pass a test from an accredited program. The program must be accredited by an agency approved by a Conference for Food Protection. Completing the ServSafe® Manager Course and passing the ServSafe® Food Protection Manager Certification Examination meets this requirement.

Your ServSafe® certification is valid in all 50 states and in most foreign countries.

Keeping Food Safe

Why is it important to be a Certified Food Protection Manager:

- CDC study suggests that it
  - reduces the risk of foodborne illness.
  - was a distinguishing factor between restaurants that experienced an outbreak and those that had not.
- FDA studies suggest more effective control of risk factors for foodborne illness

Keeping Food Safe

Government agencies:

- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- U.S. Public Health Service (PHS)
- State and local regulatory authorities

Keeping Food Safe

Government agencies:

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- State and local regulatory authorities

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA):

Inspects all food except meat, poultry, and eggs
Regulates food transported across state lines
Issues the FDA Food Code. This science-based code provides recommendations for food safety regulations.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA):

Regulates and inspects meat, poultry, and eggs
Regulates food that crosses state boundaries or involves more than one state

Agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U. S. Public Health Service (PHS):

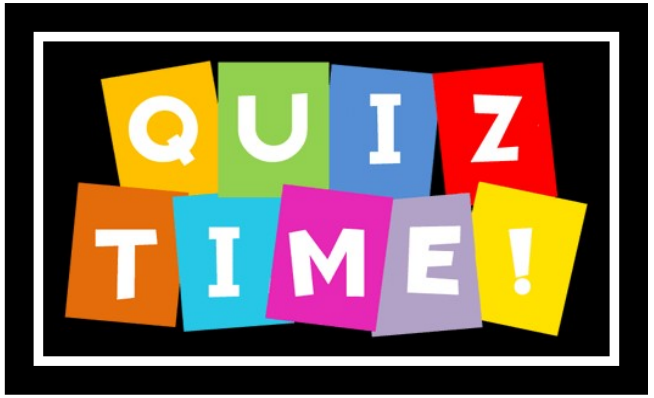
Conduct research into the causes of foodborne-illness outbreaks
Assist in investigating outbreaks

State and local regulatory authorities write or adopt codes that regulate retail and foodservice operations.

Keeping Food Safe

Regulatory authority (the local or state Health Department) responsibilities include:

- Inspecting operations
- Enforcing regulations (based on the FDA Food Code)
- Investigating complaints and illnesses
- Issuing licenses and permits
- Approving construction
- Reviewing and approving HACCP plans



Tips for Taking "Choose From Multiple Answers" Tests

- **Read the entire question.**
- **Eliminate wrong answers that do not answer what is being asked**.
- **Use the process of elimination.**
- **Select the best answer in reference to the question. You do this by thinking about what is being asked. Multiple answers may be true, but does it answer the question?**
- **Read every answer option carefully.**
- **Make an educated guess through process of elimination.**
- **Pay attention to these words...**
  Pay particularly close attention to the words *not*, *sometimes*, *always*, and *never*. An answer that includes *always* must be irrefutable. If you can find a single counterexample, then the answer is not correct. The same holds true for the word *never*. If an answer option includes *never* a single counterexample will indicate the answer is not the correct.

It's usually best to stick with your first choice answer - but not always, so read carefully!