

Food Poisoning Symptoms

Food poisoning symptoms vary with the source of contamination. Most types of food poisoning cause one or more of the following signs and symptoms:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Watery or bloody diarrhea
- Abdominal pain and cramps
- Fever

Food Poisoning Treatment

Treatment for food poisoning typically depends on the source of the illness, if known, and the severity of your symptoms. For most people, the illness resolves without treatment within a few days, though some types of food poisoning may last longer.

Treatment of food poisoning may include:

Replacement of lost fluids. Fluids and electrolytes — minerals such as sodium, potassium and calcium that maintain the balance of fluids in your body — lost to persistent diarrhea need to be replaced. Some children and adults with persistent diarrhea or vomiting may need hospitalization, where they can receive salts and fluids through a vein (intravenously), to prevent or treat dehydration.

Antibiotics. Your doctor may prescribe antibiotics if you have certain kinds of bacterial food poisoning and your symptoms are severe. Food poisoning caused by listeria needs to be treated with intravenous antibiotics during hospitalization. The sooner treatment begins, the better. During pregnancy, prompt antibiotic treatment may help keep the infection from affecting the baby.

Antibiotics will not help food poisoning caused by viruses. Antibiotics may actually worsen symptoms in certain kinds of viral or bacterial food poisoning. Talk to your doctor about your options.

