

## SIX COMMON FOOD POISONING MYTHS

### **If I get food poisoning it is most likely the last meal I ate.**

Everyone blames their food poisoning on the last meal they ate but some forms of food poisoning can take days or even weeks to eventuate.

### **Food poisoning is mild and just a bit of gastro.**

While vomiting and diarrhea are the most common symptoms, food poisoning in extreme forms can cause reactive arthritis, kidney or nerve damage and hepatitis. Each year food poisoning results in 31,920 hospitalisations, 86 deaths and 1 million visits to doctors.

### **If you are a vegetarian, your risk of food poisoning is low.**

Food poisoning outbreaks have been caused by fruit and vegetable food items such as rockmelon, frozen berries, semi-dried tomatoes, orange juice, salad items and cooked rice.

### **Home made mayonnaises and aoli's are better than the commercial ones.**

They might taste better but did you know they are a major cause of food poisoning outbreaks in Australia? If you wish to make your own mayonnaise and aoli, prepare small amounts and use immediately. Adding enough vinegar can also stop any Salmonella that may be present from growing – it does affect the taste, but it makes the product safe. A touch of sugar can reduce the sourness.

### **You can tell if chicken or minced meat dishes are cooked safely by tasting or if the juices run clear.**

A thermometer is the only way to know your food is cooked correctly to an internal 75°C.

### **If you've defrosted frozen meat or chicken it can't be safely refrozen.**

From a safety point of view it is fine to refreeze defrosted meat or chicken or any frozen food as long as it was defrosted in a fridge running at 5°C or below. You may have lost some quality in defrosting then refreezing as the cells break down a little and the food can become slightly watery. Another option is to cook the defrosted food and then divide into small portions and refreeze once it has stopped steaming.



Shire of **EAST  
Pilbara**  
AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST SHIRE

## FOOD POISONING CONTROL

Basic Food Safety for  
food businesses and traders



## MORE INFORMATION

For more information regarding information on this brochure, please contact the Shire's Environmental Health Officer on 9175 8000 or go to [eho@eastpilbara.wa.gov.au](mailto:eho@eastpilbara.wa.gov.au)

# 4 SIMPLE STEPS

Food Poisoning is caused by eating food contaminated with large quantities of harmful bacteria, parasites, viruses or toxins.

## 1 PERSONAL HYGIENE:

Unclean hands are a major source of spreading Bacteria to food and food contact surfaces.

Always wash your hands before and after:

- handling food, or food that may contain allergens.
- going to the toilet or breaks
- handling rubbish,
- coughing sneezing or blowing your nose



## 2 FOOD HANDLING AND STORAGE:

Keep food out of the danger zone!  
(5 degrees to 60 degrees)

Bacteria multiply rapidly at room and body temperature. Fridge temperatures of less than 5 degrees Celsius will slow the rate of growth while temperatures higher than 60 degrees Celsius will kill bacteria.

- Monitor deliveries, check use by dates and keep records of temperatures
- Use clean food grade containers
- Keep food covered while in storage
- Separate foods in storage e.g raw foods should be separated from cooked food, fruit and vegetables.
- Prevent cross contamination by using clean easy to clean equipment
- Do not add fresh food to foods already on display



## 3 CLEANING:

Clean premises help prevent spread of bacteria and reduce contamination of food.

- Use appropriate cleaning equipment, disposable cleaning cloths and food grade chemicals.
- Loosen and remove dirt – wash with detergent – apply sanitiser according to manufacturer instructions– allow to dry (or wipe off with disposable cloths).
- Maintain a cleaning schedule to stay on top of everything that needs to be cleaned.



## 4 PEST CONTROL:

Food premises must be kept free of pests. Pests that can spread bacteria and diseases include rodents, insects such as flies and cockroaches and spiders.

- Undertake regular maintenance on your premises to keep pests out.
- Engage licenced pest controllers for assistance with monitoring and treatment if needed.

