

Food businesses play an important role in preventing food borne illness within our community. Food businesses and food handlers have a responsibility to ensure the safety and suitability of food handled by the business.

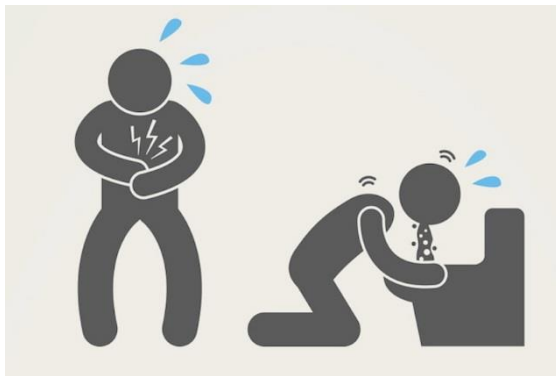
# NOV Australian 10-17 Food Safety 2018 Week

## Responsibilities of food businesses

A food business or the proprietor/supervisor of a food business is

responsible for ensuring that food handlers suffering from gastrointestinal symptoms or foodborne disease do not handle or contaminate food. A person suffering from a gastrointestinal illness must not engage in any food handling activities.

## Food poisoning - take it seriously



If a food business is aware that a food handler, or anyone else handling food for the business (such as friends and relatives) has or may have a food-borne illness, the business must ensure that this person does not handle food or food contact surfaces. A food business may suspect a person has a food-borne illness if they have:

- vomiting,
- diarrhoea,
- fever or a sore throat with fever.

Alternatively, a doctor may diagnose a food handler as suffering from a foodborne disease.

**Food handlers with symptoms of gastroenteritis or confirmed food poisoning should not attend work until at least 48 hours after symptoms have ceased.**

### Common foodborne diseases that can be transmitted by food handlers

Campylobacteriosis	Norovirus
Cryptosporidiosis	Pathogenic <i>Escherichia coli</i> infection
Entamoeba histolytica infection	Rotavirus
Enteric fever (typhoid, para typhoid)	Salmonellosis
Giardia infection	Shigellosis
Hepatitis A	<i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> gastroenteritis
Hepatitis E	Yersiniosis

Food businesses must ensure all food handlers are aware of the health and hygiene requirements that apply specifically to food handlers. A proprietor/supervisor of a food business who knowingly allows a food handler to handle food whilst suffering from a gastrointestinal like illness is guilty of an offence under the *Food Act 2001*.

## Responsibilities of Food Handlers

Food handlers have a responsibility to do whatever is reasonable to ensure they do not make food unsafe or unsuitable for people to eat. Food handlers also have specific responsibilities related to their health and hygiene.

### Are you a food handler?

A food handler is anyone who works in a food business and handles either food or surfaces which are likely to be in contact with food such as cutlery, plates and bowls. A food handler may do many different things for a food business including making, cooking, preparing, serving, packing, displaying and storing food. Food handlers can also be involved in manufacturing, producing, collecting, extracting, processing, transporting, delivering, thawing or preserving food.

### If a food handler has a food borne illness

Food handlers must do whatever is reasonable to make sure they do not contaminate food. If you handle food while suffering from or recovering from a gastrointestinal illness, there is a likelihood of food being contaminated.

If you have symptoms or suspect that you are suffering from a food borne disease or are a carrier, you must notify your workplace.

As well as reporting the food-borne illness, food handlers must not handle any food where there is a chance they might make the food unsafe or unsuitable because of their illness.

Any person who handles food whilst suffering from a gastrointestinal like illness and does not notify their work place is guilty of an offence under the *Food Act 2001*.

*For goodness sake*

**Tell  
us if  
you  
are ill**



**Many food poisoning incidents are caused by food handlers who have continued to handle food after falling ill themselves.**

**If you know you are suffering from, are a carrier, or have symptoms of a food-borne illness especially vomiting or diarrhoea you must:**

- > report this to your supervisor;
- > not engage in food handling;
- > if performing alternative duties, take all practicable measures to prevent food from being contaminated.



Reference: Food Safety Practices & General Requirements - Standard 3.2.2 Section 14

**For more information contact Eastern Health Authority on 8132 3600.**



local councils working together to protect the health of the community