

How to?



10) Act during sickness and illness

Why is this important?

People who work around open food while suffering from certain infections (mainly from bacteria and viruses) can contaminate the food or surfaces the food may come into contact with.

A number of controls are therefore in place which should be followed at all times when in the kitchen.

When a member of team members has had food poisoning symptoms (sickness, diarrhea, Gastroenteritis), it is essential that they are excluded from work for 48 hours AFTER SYMPTOMS HAVE STOPPED.

Injury and Illness

Food handlers must immediately notify their supervisor of any of the following:

- Diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, stomach pains (i.e. symptoms of food-borne illness).
- Colds, coughs and other respiratory or chest infections.
- Skin infections or conditions, e.g. Septic wounds, dermatitis, eczema, rash infections of the eye, ear, mouth, nose and throat.
- Symptoms of food-borne illness in the food handler's household.
- Return from any trip overseas.

Where a supervisor – in discussion with team members of the Health and Safety Service – suspects a food-borne illness, the procedures in Health and Safety Guidance Document G2 (“Gastroenteritis”) must be followed.

On return from any sickness absence or trip overseas, food handlers must complete a Food Handler Review Health Questionnaire in co-operation with their supervisor.

For conditions and answers not covered by Health and Safety Guidance Document G2 (“Gastroenteritis”), the Health and Safety Service should be contacted for advice.

A fully stocked first aid kit should be available within the kitchen area, including a supply of blue waterproof dressings (blue dressings ensure that they can be seen easily in food).

All cuts, abrasions and burns must be covered with a waterproof dressing.

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Check your understanding by:

Why should only blue plasters be used in the kitchen?

What guidance document is available for use during a suspected food poisoning incident?

How long should you stay away from work for after food poisoning symptoms e.g. sickness, diarrhea, gastroenteritis?

Are you required to notify your manager if you have a cold or cough?

You can tell it's correct if:

All team members know the correct procedure when ill.

All team members are confident that they can admit if they are feeling ill and that senior team members know the correct procedure to follow when these situations arise.

If team members believe they may be ill, they stay away from work and seek advice before entering the kitchen.

Hints and tips:

Seek advice before leaving for work if you suspect you may be ill.