



## Staphylococcus aureus (Staf-le-o-cock-us Or-re-us)

### What is Staphylococcus aureus?

Staphylococcus aureus is a bacteria that produces a toxin which causes food poisoning.



### Symptoms

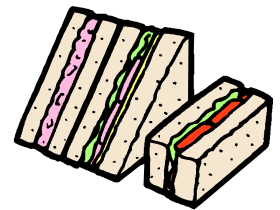
It usually takes between 2-6 hours after eating food which has the toxin in for symptoms to develop and they may include:

- Vomiting
- Abdominal pains
- Diarrhoea

The illness usually lasts no longer than 2 days.

### How is it spread?

The Staphylococcus aureus bacteria commonly occur in your nose, throat and on skin infections or wounds. They can be transferred from humans to food through poor food hygiene practices. The bacteria then multiplies and produces a poison, which, when eaten irritates the stomach lining and causes vomiting.



Prevention: Scrupulous personal hygiene when preparing food and thoroughly cooking food. The bacteria and toxin are killed if food is subsequently cooked thoroughly, so this bacteria is mainly associated with ready to eat foods.

### Can I still work?

Whilst experiencing the symptoms of Staphylococcus food poisoning, personal hygiene should be scrupulous and food handling should be avoided. Once the symptoms have ceased and you feel well enough, you may return to work. You should discuss your illness with your manager upon your return



For further information, contact your local Environmental Protection Division, telephone number 01932 838383, or in case of continuing illness, consult your family doctor.