



## Bacillus cereus

(Bah-sill-us serious)

### What is Bacillus cereus?

Bacillus cereus (B. cereus) is a bacteria that produces a toxin in the food which causes food poisoning.

### Symptoms

It usually takes between 1-16 hours after eating food which has the toxin in for symptoms to develop and they may include:

- Diarrhoea (maybe bloody and severe)
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Stomach Cramps

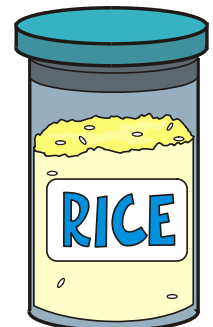
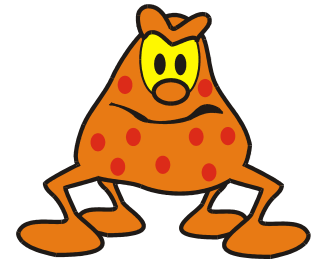
The illness usually lasts no longer than 24-36 hours.

### How is it spread?

B. cereus occurs naturally in the environment and is frequently found in rice dishes, occasionally pasta dishes, meat or vegetable dishes, dairy products, soups, sauces and sweet pastry products (High-Risk Foods).

The B. cereus spores survive normal cooking and can subsequently multiply and produce a poison if the food is not eaten or cooled quickly enough after cooking. The spores and poison are heat resistant and so won't be destroyed by any further cooking.

Prevention: These high risk foods should be kept above 63°C if not eaten immediately after cooking, or cooled within 1½ hours of cooking and then kept at 8°C or below until required for use (no more than 3 days). This food should only be reheated once after cooking and cooling, and it must be thoroughly reheated to a minimum core temperature of 70°C for 2 mins.



### Can I still work?

During the symptoms of B. cereus 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 Services Department, telephone number 01932 838383, or in case of continuing illness, consult your family doctor.