



Clostridium perfringens (Clos-trid-e-um purr-frin-gins)

What is Clostridium perfringens?

Clostridium perfringens is a bacteria that produces a poison which causes food poisoning.

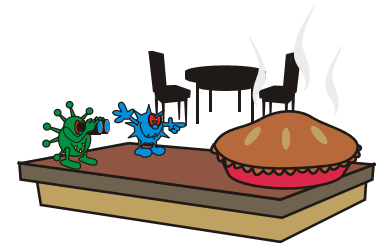


Symptoms

It normally takes 8-24 hours after eating the contaminated food before the symptoms develop and they may include:

- Stomach Pain
- Diarrhoea
- Nausea

The illness usually lasts no longer than 12-24 hours.



How is it spread?

Clostridium perfringens bacteria releases food poisoning spores if food is not cooked or cooled quickly enough and there is an absence of air. It thrives at the bottom of stockpots or in the centre of a meat pie. When the contaminated food is consumed the spores release a toxin, causing the food poisoning. Therefore Clostridium perfringens is commonly associated with large scale cooking like canteens, hospitals and schools.

Prevention: Ensuring these types of food are thoroughly cooked, then 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 type of food should only be reheated once after cooking and cooling and it must be thoroughly reheated to a minimum temperature of 70°C for 2 mins.

Can I still work?

During the diarrhoea phase hygiene should be scrupulous and food handling avoided. It is during this time that it is possible to pass the infection on to another person. 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.

