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Foodborne Illness: Did You Know?

By News Canada

Foodborne Illness: Did You Know?

by: News Canada

(NC)—Although most recover completely from it, some people who get food poisoning (foodborne illness) may develop long-term health problems as a result. Illnesses such as chronic arthritis, and hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS), which leads to kidney failure, affect not only those afflicted, but also society and the economy at large. Health Canada estimates that the costs associated with these illnesses exceeds \$1 billion per year.

One way to avoid foodborne disease is to exercise care when grilling those hamburger patties on the barbecue this summer. Cook to temperature not to colour. According to recent studies, visual clues such as clear running juice or brown coloured centres are not always reliable. Health Canada recommends cooking ground beef to 71°C (160°F), and testing with a food thermometer. When patties are almost done, remove from heat and insert an instant-read food thermometer sideways into the centre of the thickest burger. If the temperature registers at least 71°C (160°F), the burger is done, if not, continue cooking until a minimum temperature of 71°C (160°F) is reached. At this temperature E. coli (the bacteria that may be present in ground beef) is killed and the patties are considered safe to eat. For more information on food safety, visit the Canadian Partnership for Consumer Food Safety Education Web site at

www.canfightbac.org

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How To Protect Yourself Against Foodborne Illness

By News Canada

(NC)—Common symptoms of foodborne illness include diarrhea, abdominal cramping, fever, sometimes blood or pus in the stools, headache, vomiting and severe exhaustion. Symptoms will vary according to the type and amount of harmful microorganisms present in the food. Symptoms may come on as early as half-hour after eating the contaminated food or may not develop for several days or weeks. Symptoms usually last only a day or two, but can, in some cases, persist for a week to 10 days. For most healthy people, foodborne illnesses aren't long lasting or life threatening. However for older adults, young children, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems, foodborne illness can be very serious and even life-threatening.

What can you do to protect yourself from food poisoning? Follow these four easy food safety steps listed below:

CLEAN: Wash hands and surfaces often

After you've handled or cut raw meat, wash your hands, the cutting board, counter, knives, and any other utensils you've used with hot soapy water before you use them again to prepare any other food.

SEPARATE: Don't cross-contaminate

Do not allow ready-to-eat foods such as lettuce to come into contact with raw meat or raw meat juice.

COOK: Cook to proper temperature

Thoroughly cook all ground beef to 71° C (160° F) as recommended by Health Canada. Use an

Foodborne Illness: Did You Know?

instant-read food thermometer to test the middle of burgers or the centre of a meatloaf.

CHILL: Refrigerate promptly

Cover and store leftover cooked food in the refrigerator or freezer as soon as possible. Make sure your refrigerator is set at a temperature of 4°C (40°F) or colder, and keep your freezer set at -18°C (0°F)

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