

OUR FOOD AND THE ACCOMPANYING PERSON(S)

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Abstract

An average male person has an approximately 6.5 m long gastrointestinal (GI) tract that is covered by the intestinal epithelium, with about 400 - 500 m² surface. Current medical and alternative knowledge stress that the GI tract is one of the largest and most important organs in humans. There are more than 1,000 microbial species determined as the gut flora, a highly complex and dynamic community responsible for continuous physical barrier formed by the tightly bound epithelial cell, immune system balance, role in metabolic process and also participate in energetic field of each human. On the other side the world of food borne microbes contains a mix of approximately 250 different types of bacteria, viruses, parasites, molds, and algae that are known to cause disease in humans and are therefore called foodborne pathogens.

Common symptoms of food borne illness typically include diarrhea and/or vomiting. World Health Organization - WHO reveals the growing problem of foodborne illness around the world, showing that hundreds of millions of people worldwide are getting sick from contaminated food. The data is from 2010, which is the latest global data available: 582 million cases of 22 different food-borne diseases; 351,000 associated deaths; 52,000 deaths caused by *Salmonella*; 37,000 deaths caused by *E. coli*; 35,000 deaths caused by *Norovirus*; 40% under the age of 5 who suffered from food-borne diseases. Each year we obtain over 1000 stool cultures per year. *Salmonella enteritidis* is the most common food-borne isolated bacteria (60 per year). *Staphylococcus aureus* enterotoxin is the second most common responsible for food poisoning (30 per year). *Rotavirus* is on the top in the viral list of food-borne pathogens. *Giardia* is most common parasite isolated in our patients (40 per year). The most important point of food poisoning is that occurs as sporadic cases, but more often as epidemics and it is preventable.

The main steps in prevention are very simple: hand washing, food surfaces often cleaning, utensils washing, separation of raw foods from ready-to-eat foods, cooking at safe temperature, promptly refrigerating, safe defrosting and throwing away when ever in doubt.

Key words: Food, Gut flora, Foodborne pathogen, Foodborne illness.