



The DANGERS of eating RAW SHELLFISH

Did You Know?

Each year, millions of Americans eat raw shellfish, such as oysters and clams. For some people, eating raw shellfish can cause serious illness or even death due to Vibriosis infection.

What is Vibriosis?

Vibriosis is an illness caused by a bacterium found naturally in warm, saltwater, coastal environments. Illness can occur year-round; however, most infections are reported from May – October, when water temperatures are warmer.

Infection often occurs after a person has eaten raw or undercooked shellfish. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that annually, over 50,000 cases of illnesses result from eating contaminated shellfish.

Symptoms of Infection

Symptoms typically start within 12-24 hours, can last 1-7 days and may include:

- Watery Diarrhea
- Stomach Cramps
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Chills



Are YOU at Risk?

Anyone can get sick from vibriosis, and most people will recover on their own. You are at increased risk for serious illness or death if you have any of the following health conditions:

- **Cancer**
- **Diabetes**
- **Hemochromatosis** (iron disorder)
- **Liver Disease** (from hepatitis, cirrhosis or alcoholism)
- **Stomach Disorders** (previous stomach surgery or low stomach acid due to antacid use)
- **Weakened Immune System**

Prevention of Illness

You can reduce your risk of illness by following these precautions:

- **DO NOT eat raw or undercooked shellfish.**
- **Avoid cross-contamination.**
 - o Keep raw shellfish away from other food when shopping.
 - o Refrigerate during storage.
 - o Thoroughly clean all surfaces and cutlery.
- **Wash your hands** with soap and water after handling shellfish.

Cooking Tips

Discard those with opened shells before cooking.

- **In the shell:**
 - o Boil or steam until shells open, then continue to boil for 5 minutes or steam for 9 minutes.
 - o Discard any that do not open after cooking.
- **Shucked (removed from the shell):**
 - o Boil, simmer or broil for at least 3 minutes.
 - o Fry in oil for 3 minutes at 375 degrees.
 - o Bake for 10 minutes at 450 degrees.