



Topic: Poisons and Food Poisoning

In today's world it takes knowledge and awareness to prevent substances from entering our bodies that may be poisonous.

Obvious or disguised, poison kills. It does little good to look for the traditional skull and crossed bones on products because, in most cases, the product is only poisonous in certain ways. Helpful products can turn deadly if used in the wrong way:

Take a medicine properly and it's helpful, but if it's taken incorrectly or taken by the wrong person, it can be poison. Use paints, solvents, or insecticides properly and they will serve you well. Inhale them, or let them rest on your skin frequently or for long periods, and they can poison you from the outside of your body. Some substances that don't harm adults can kill a child.



Food is basic for life, but the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* estimates that 9,000 people die every year from food poisoning in the U.S. Millions more are sickened. The worldwide food system that gives grocery shoppers more choices has a troubling cost. The rate of salmonella illness alone has doubled over the past 20 years.

While there is little consumers can do to prevent contamination at food processing and food handling centers around the world, they can protect themselves to a large extent by carefully cooking food thoroughly.

To prevent food poisoning originating in their own homes, consumers should:

- +** Wash hands before touching food and after touching raw meat, poultry, or fish. Make sure utensils that have come in contact with raw foods are washed before using on other foods.
- +** Do not leave cooked food unrefrigerated for more than two hours. meal.
- +** Keep cool foods, like salads, at cool temperatures. If the potato salad, for example, stands at room temperature for more than two hours, discard it.