

Foodborne illnesses

Foodborne disease is caused by consuming contaminated foods or beverages. Many different disease-causing microbes, or pathogens, can contaminate foods, so there are many different foodborne infections. Poisonous chemicals or other harmful substances can also contaminate food and cause sickness. More than 250 types of foodborne diseases have been identified.

The most commonly recognized foodborne infections are those caused by the bacteria *Campylobacter*, *Salmonella*, and *E. coli* O157:H7, and by a group of viruses called calicivirus, also known as the Norwalk and Norwalk-like viruses. When outbreaks of such illnesses occur, disease investigators try to track down the contaminated food and the source of the contamination. Officials may issue food recalls to prevent items suspected of being tainted from being distributed and consumed. To help Southwest Georgia residents stay posted on on-going foodborne disease investigations and food recalls, our webpage now includes a link to updates from the Federal Department of Agriculture.

To view the latest on the national peanut butter-Salmonella outbreak, please go to:

<http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/peanutbutterrecall/index.cfm>

To view the FDA's list of recalled foods, please click on: <http://www.fda.gov/opacom/7alerts.html>