Foodborne disease: other/unknown

2007 Case Definition (North Carolina)

Clinical description

There is no one syndrome that is foodborne illness. More than 250 different foodborne diseases have been described. Most of these diseases are infections, caused by a variety of bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can be foodborne. Other diseases are poisonings, caused by harmful toxins such as staphylococcal or botulinum toxin or chemicals that have contaminated the food. While there are many different illnesses and pathogens that could be involved, the first symptoms are usually nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps and diarrhea.

North Carolina does disease specific surveillance for the following food and waterborne diseases: Botulism, Campylobacter infection, Cholera, CJD, Cryptosporidiosis, Cyclosporiasis, *E.coli* shiga-toxin producing infection, *Clostridium perfringens*, foodborne: staphylococcal, foodborne:ciguatera, foodborne: mushroom toxicity, foodborne: scombroid fish, Hepatitis A, Listeriosis, Salmonellosis, Shigellosis, Trichinosis, Typhoid Fever, and Vibrio infection. If individual cases or outbreaks are recognized due to any of these reportable conditions, please report them accordingly using the appropriate surveillance forms.

In addition to specific foodborne disease surveillance, all outbreaks of foodborne disease are reportable, regardless of the pathogen involved. Report cases as other/unknown whenever foodborne transmission is documented or suspected and the responsible agent is either unknown or not routinely reportable.

To be considered a foodborne disease, the microbe or toxin must enter the gastrointestinal tract through ingestion (food or water source), not through person-to-person transmission.

Laboratory criteria for diagnosis

- Isolation of infectious agent or toxin compatible with symptoms from any clinical specimen

Case classification

Confirmed: a case that is laboratory confirmed

Probable: a clinically compatible case that is epidemiologically linked to a confirmed case