

An Easy Way to Remember the “BIG 6” Foodborne Illnesses

A foodborne illness is any illness that is transmitted to customers by contaminated food.

Typically it is spread by sick foodhandlers via fecal/oral transmission. That is why food workers are required to report certain symptoms and illnesses to managers. Managers are required to take action when a food worker reports they are ill with vomiting, diarrhea, jaundice, sore throat accompanied by a fever and/or one of the “Big 6” illnesses.

The required actions to be taken by a manager ranges from reporting the information to the Health Department and prohibiting the employee from working, to assigning the employee duties that do not include handling food, food contact surfaces, clean equipment or utensils, or single-service items (such as sandwich wrappers or plastic forks).

The best course of action is to “**N**eed to **S**end **S**ick **E**mployees **H**ome **N**ow.” This phrase provides an easy way to remember the “Big 6” exclusionary foodborne illnesses.

Nicely.....Nontypoidal Salmonella

Send.....Salmonella Typhi (Typhoid Fever)

Sick.....Shigella

Employees.....E. coli (Shiga toxin-producing E. coli)

Home.....Hepatitis A (virus)

Now.....Norovirus (virus)

Ill Foodhandlers may not return to work and/or their normal duties until they been symptom free for at least 24 hours (longer for jaundice) and/or cleared in writing by a medical doctor to return to work in a food service operation.

