

CDC: Progress on 6 Key Pathogens



The CDC *2013 Progress Report on Six Key Pathogens Compared to 2006-2008* was released on April 17. The following information is taken from that report:

The nation's food safety grades are out and the results are mixed. CDC's annual report card, produced by FoodNet, shows some recent progress in reducing Salmonella. Other pathogens have not shown similar success, and we could even be losing ground on past progress in E.coli reduction.

There is a critical need to implement more prevention measures and keep a close eye on these trends over the next year.

Highlights from the 2013 FoodNet report include a comparison of rates for different time periods. For the short term, the CDC compared 2013 with the rates of the preceding three years, 2010-2012. For the longer term, the CDC compared 2013 with the 2006-2008 baseline period.

- Salmonella infections decreased by about nine percent in 2013 compared with the previous three years.
 - Rates remained the same when compared to the longer term 2006-2008 baseline period
 - Still well above the national goal for 2020 of 11.4 cases per 100,000 people
- Campylobacter infections have risen 13 percent since 2006-2008.
 - Often linked to contaminated chicken
- Vibrio infections were at the highest level observed since active tracking began in 1996.
 - Often linked to eating raw shellfish
 - Rates of *Vibrio vulnificus*, the most severe strain, have remained steady.
- E.coli infections continue to inch up and the progress noted from previous years has stalled.
 - Still about 30% lower than our FoodNet baseline year of 1996-1998
- Rates of the other foodborne infections tracked have not changed since 2006-2008.

What are some recent efforts to reduce foodborne illness?

- Establishment in 2011 of performance standards for Campylobacter contamination of whole broiler chickens in processing plants.
- Approval of more stringent time and temperature controls for oysters after harvest to prevent *Vibrio vulnificus* infections.
- The Food Safety Modernization Act of 2011: It gives FDA additional authority to regulate food facilities, establish standards for safe produce, recall contaminated foods, oversee imported foods, and which requires improvements in surveillance and response to outbreaks. It calls on CDC to strengthen surveillance and outbreak response.
- USDA-FSIS' new strategies to address Salmonella contamination in meat and poultry contained in its Salmonella Action Plan.

What are some next steps to reduce foodborne illness?

There are many partners in prevention of foodborne illness, including state and federal public health authorities, the federal food regulatory authorities, the food industry, consumer and patient advocacy groups, and consumers themselves. Enhanced measures are needed to:

- Control or eliminate pathogens in domestic and imported food;
- Reduce or prevent contamination of food during growing, harvesting, and processing;
- Continue the education of all food-handlers, including restaurant workers and consumers, about risks and prevention measures; and
- Detect and protect against drug-resistant Salmonella.

For CDC email updates go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/Other/emailupdates/>