



How is food poisoning caused?

The name 'food poisoning' is misleading. It is not the food that causes the poisoning but toxins or chemicals that contaminate the food. This worksheet only covers food poisoning caused by bacteria.

Four major causes of food poisoning are:

1. Not cooking food properly

2. Not keeping food at the right temperature

3. Cross-contamination

4. Poor hygiene



For each mistake in the table below, think of occasions when it might happen, and how food poisoning might be caused in each case. The first row has been done for you.

Mistake	When this might happen	How does it cause food poisoning
Not cooking food properly	<i>If a cook follows instructions for roasting a chicken but the oven is not as hot as it should be.</i>	<i>The middle of the chicken is not cooked properly and so pathogenic bacteria are not destroyed. If bacteria such as Campylobacter or Salmonella are present they could cause food poisoning.</i>
Not keeping food at the right temperature		
Cross-contamination		
Poor hygiene		