

## FOOD -RELATED ILLNESSES

Food-related illnesses are those which are due to malnutrition or bad diet, as well as different forms of food poisoning, caused by the consumption of food or drink contaminated by microorganisms.

### Malnutrition

Malnutrition is caused by inadequate diet.

Often is a result of food shortages or poverty

BUT...even people who get enough to eat can develop malnutrition if they make poor food choices.

Malnutrition may result from insufficient food (undernutrition) or excessive food (overnutrition) or because of the lack of some nutrient in the diet (deficiency diseases).

### Risks of malnutrition...



There is no “perfect” diet because everyone is built different and has different nutrient needs.

### 1. Undernutrition

Under nutrition occurs when there is a deficiency of one or more nutrients. It may be mild or severe. Mild forms of under nutrition is due to, e.g. micronutrient deficiency.

The disorders which cause under nutrition include rickets, anorexia and bulimia.

\* **Rickets** is caused by the lack of calcium and phosphorus. It causes deformities of the bones and deficient growth. This illness is common in poor countries, due to the lack of food.

\* **Anorexia nervosa** is due to a psychological disorder which means that the sufferer has a distorted image of his or her body. Because of this disorder, frequent among adolescents, the sufferers are afraid of gaining weight, so they do excessive physical exercise and follow a very strict diet.



\* **Bulimia** is often accompanied by anorexia nervosa. Those who suffer from this illness eat enormous amounts of food and then provoke vomiting so that they don't gain weight.



## 2. Over nutrition

The illnesses caused by eating too much include obesity, characterized by excessive body fat . The most common form of over nutrition is having an energy intake in excess of needs, resulting in overweight and obesity. Very high intakes of minerals and fat soluble vitamins (more can usually be obtained from food sources alone) can be toxic. This is because they are stored in the body, e.g. vitamin A is stored in the liver.

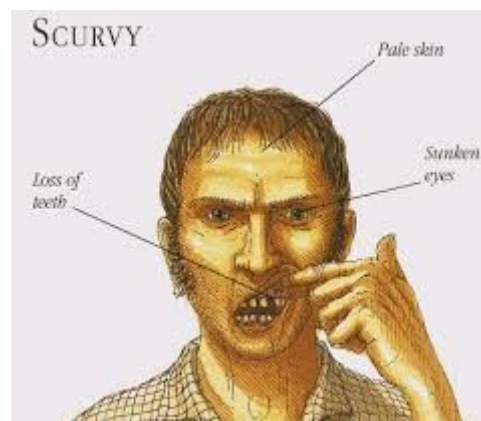
**Obesity** is a risk factor for those with heart diseases, diabetics (who accumulate a large amount of glucose in the blood) or those suffering from hypertension (people whose arterial blood pressure is higher than that which is healthy).



Obesity is second only to smoking as a cause of cancer.

## 3. Deficiency diseases

The most frequent deficiency disease is **avitaminosis**, caused by the lack or deficiency of some vitamin. An example of avitaminosis is scurvy, caused by a lack of vitamin C.



On occasions, vitamins may accumulate in the organism. This leads to **hypervitaminosis**.

## Food poisoning

Food poisoning may occur from eating food contaminated with bacteria, viruses, or other parasites; or because of the ingestion of food contaminated with chemical substances, such as pesticides, for example.

When the poisoning is accompanied by an infection, it is called toxi-infection.

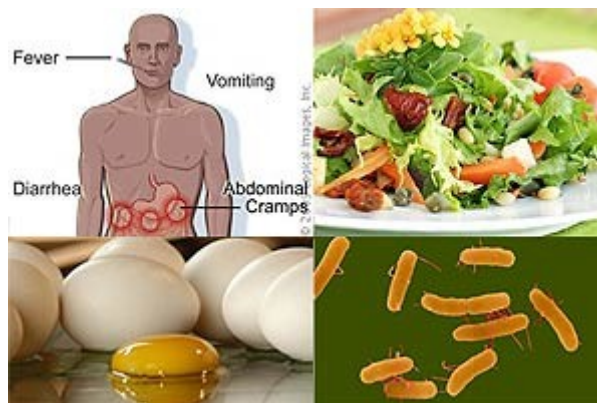


Some types of food poisoning caused by bacteria:

The main types of food poisoning caused by bacteria are salmonellosis and botulism.

**1. Salmonellosis** is caused by eating food contaminated with bacteria of the *Salmonella* genus.

These bacteria are usually found in contaminated water, badly conserved foods containing eggs and meat. The symptoms of this illness are headaches, vomiting and diarrhea. It usually lasts one week and is particularly serious in children and old people.



**2. Botulism** is caused by eating food contaminated with the bacteria *Clostridium botulinum*. This illness is characterized by the appearance of neurological disorders and it can be lethal. The usual cause is eating tinned food in bad condition.

