

## [Vibrio Species Causing Vibriosis](#)

<b>Sources</b>	Most people become infected by eating raw or undercooked shellfish, particularly oysters. Certain <i>Vibrio</i> species can also cause a skin infection when an open wound is exposed to salt water or brackish water. Brackish water is a mixture of fresh water and salt water. It is often found where rivers meet the sea.
<b>Incubation period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vibrio wound infection: 1–7 days</li><li>• Gastrointestinal illness: 2–48 hours</li></ul>
<b>Symptoms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>In healthy people:</b> Diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain</li><li>• <b>In high-risk people:</b> Sudden chills, fever, shock, skin lesions</li></ul>
<b>Duration of illness</b>	3 days, when spread through food. Duration of wound infections is variable.
<b>What to do</b>	If you have symptoms within a few days after eating raw or undercooked seafood, especially oysters, or develop a skin infection after being exposed to salt water or brackish water, contact your doctor. <b>Don't chance it!</b> Some <i>Vibrio</i> species, such as <i>Vibrio vulnificus</i> , can cause particularly severe and life-threatening infections.
<b>Prevention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't eat raw or undercooked oysters or other shellfish. Cook them before eating.</li><li>• Always <a href="#">wash your hands</a> with soap and water after handling raw shellfish.</li><li>• Avoid contaminating cooked shellfish with raw shellfish and its juices.</li><li>• Stay out of salt water or brackish water if you have a wound (including cuts and scrapes), or cover your wound with a waterproof bandage if there's a possibility it could come into contact with salt water or brackish water, raw seafood, or raw seafood juices.</li><li>• Wash wounds and cuts thoroughly with soap and water if they have been exposed to seawater or raw seafood or its juices.</li></ul>

If you are in a group more likely to get a *Vibrio* infection, such as people with liver disease:

- Wear clothes and shoes that can protect you from cuts and scrapes when in salt water or brackish water.
- Wear protective gloves when handling raw seafood.

Date Last Reviewed November 15, 2024