

[Vibrio Species Causing Vibriosis](#)

Sources	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.
Incubation period	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vibrio wound infection: 1–7 days• Gastrointestinal illness: 2–48 hours
Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In healthy people: Diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain• In high-risk people: Sudden chills, fever, shock, skin lesions
Duration of illness	3 days, when spread through food. Duration of wound infections is variable.
What to do	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. Don't chance it! Some <i>Vibrio</i> species, such as <i>Vibrio vulnificus</i> , can cause particularly severe and life-threatening infections.
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't eat raw or undercooked oysters or other shellfish. Cook them before eating.• Always wash your hands with soap and water after handling raw shellfish.• Avoid contaminating cooked shellfish with raw shellfish and its juices.• 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.• Wash wounds and cuts thoroughly with soap and water if they have been exposed to seawater or raw seafood or its juices.

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