

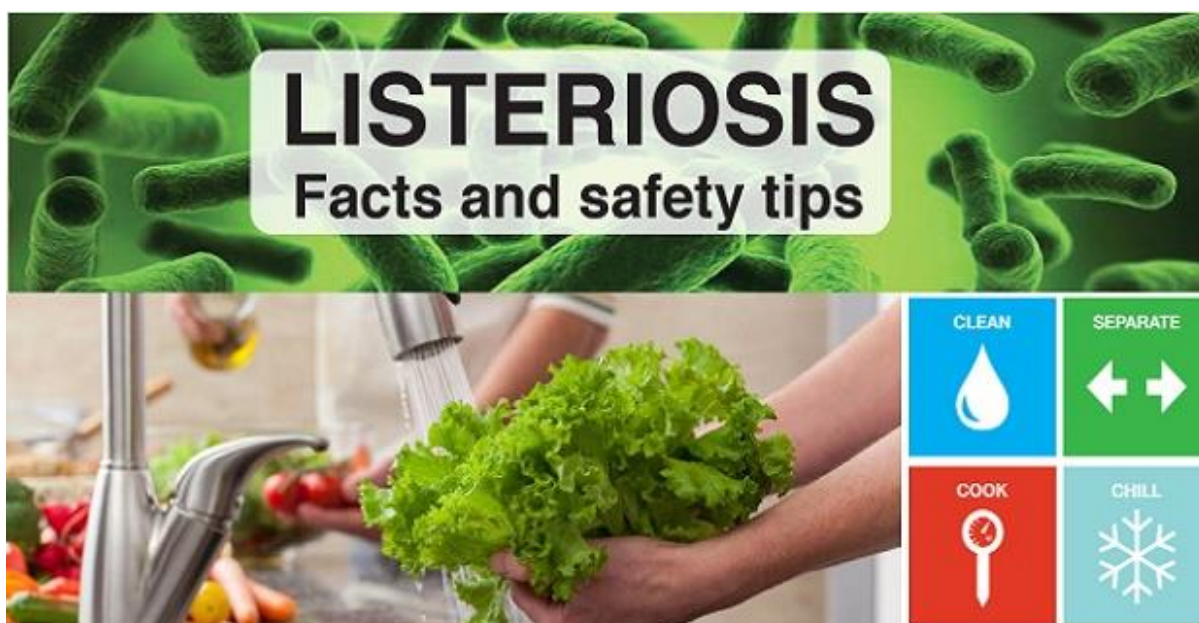


basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME (NSNP)

Preventing the outbreak and spread of Listeriosis in South Africa is key after the recent spate of incidences reported where people were hospitalised and fatal in some cases.



WHAT IS LISTERIOSIS?

Listeriosis is a serious, but preventable and treatable disease caused by the bacterium *Listeria monocytogenes*. The bacteria are widely distributed in nature and can be found in soil, water, vegetation and the faeces of some animals. Animal products (including meat, meat products, and dairy products), seafood and fresh produce such as fruits and vegetables can be contaminated from these sources. There has been 852 laboratory-confirmed cases of Listeriosis in the country as at 05 February 2018.

SYMPTOMS OF LISTERIOSIS

Be alert and report to the nearest clinic any onset of the following symptoms: **diarrhoea, headache, neck stiffness, confusion, loss of balance and flue like symptoms.**

MESSAGE TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

As part of preventative and control measures the Department of Basic Education (DBE) continues to raise the standards on health, hygiene and food safety through sharing of the above information. **School Principals** and stakeholders have the responsibility to ensure food safety, identify and minimise hazards in the food served to learners.

- In the case of a suspected Listeriosis illness, the School Principal will be required to contact the local Department of Health and also report the incident to the local municipality.
- Ensure that NSNP food is sourced from reputable companies, retailers and local stores that are licensed with Certificate of Acceptability.
- Ensure that **Volunteer Food Handlers** prepare fresh food daily. Food must be cooked every morning and served immediately and not be stored overnight to avoid excessive bacterial growth in warm temperature.
- **Volunteer Food Handlers** should maintain a high level of personal hygiene and wash hands at all times. Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly. Ensure safe preparation, cooking, serving of meals and cleaning the cooking area.
- **Learners** should wash any fruit bought from the school vendor before consuming it.
- Practice basic food hygiene principles as outlined in the World Health Organisation's '**Five Keys to Safer Food**' programme. The core 'commandments' of food hygiene are:
 - Keep clean: wash your hands before handling food and often during food preparation.
 - Separate raw and cooked: separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods.
 - Cook thoroughly: cook foods thoroughly, especially meat, poultry, eggs and seafood.
 - Keep food at safe temperatures: refrigerate and reheat foods correctly.
 - Use safe water and raw materials: use safe water or make it safe (by boiling); choose foods processed for safety such as pasteurised dairy products; wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly, especially if eaten.



- **Apply the Five keys to Safer Foods at all times in Tuck-shops, Kitchens and by Food Vendors.**