

Crew Health: Food safety on board

When it comes to ensuring a fit and healthy crew, all vessels should apply food safety principles. Even if not required by international regulations, good practice in regards to food safety should be in place as part of any operation. This helps to ensure that crew members remain in good health and are able to carry out their roles on board to the best of their ability.

What is food safety?

Food safety is much more than good hygiene. Of course, hygiene is an important factor but equal to this is ensuring correct storage of food, including the covering and separation of raw and cooked foods, and regularly maintaining refrigeration equipment to ensure that food stuffs are kept at an optimum temperature. In addition, effective cleaning and good personal hygiene play a pivotal role.

A common illness on board that is directly related to poor food safety principals is food poisoning. This can be prevalent for many reasons and is a cause of many crew illness incidents notified to the Club. Sources of food poisoning include poor personal hygiene, dirty dishes and associated utensils and undercooking.

Guidelines for food safety on board

It should be remembered that attention to safe food handling is every seafarers' responsibility and negligence of this can have serious consequences to both an individual's health and also the on board operational commitments of the vessel. Claims related to illness are frequently notified to the Club, with the number of claims reported remaining steady in number over the last five policy years. The Club has [partnered](#) with the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) to raise awareness of crew-related illness and to assist our Members in mitigating against related incidents.

As part of this partnership, the Club is able to offer Members two publications concerning food safety which give guidelines and share advice on the topic. ***These publications can be found to the right of this page.***

This article is one of a series of articles in which the Club shares guidance and practical tips to our Members to promote good crew health on board. [All articles in this series can be viewed here.](#)