

Assessment of five foodborne pathogens in full-service Lebanese restaurants

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Food-borne Disease Prevention and Risk Assessment” is a Special Issue of the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health on understanding how food-borne disease a global threat to health is still today and to be able to target strategies to reduce its prevalence. Despite decades of government and industry interventions, food-borne disease remains unexpectedly high in both developed and developing nations. For instance, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that one in six persons in the United States suffers from gastroenteritis each year, with up to 3000 fatalities arising from consumption of contaminated food [1].

According to the WHO Initiative to Estimate the Global Burden of Food-borne Diseases, 31 global hazards caused 600 million food-borne illnesses and 420,000 deaths in 2010; diarrheal disease agents were the leading cause of these in most regions caused by Salmonella, but Taenia solium, hepatitis A virus, and aflatoxin were also significant causes of food-borne illness [2,3]. The global burden of food-borne disease by these 31 hazards was 33 (95% UI 25–46) million Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) in 2010; 40% of the food-borne disease burden was among children under five years of age. Since we know that most food-borne diseases are preventable, these are astonishing figures for the 21st century.

We are familiar with some of the underlying conditions: unsafe water used for the cleaning and processing of food, poor food-production processes, inadequate storage, and food-handling practices including infected food workers and cross-contamination of food. These can be coupled with inadequate or poorly enforced regulatory standards and industry compliance. However, knowledge of these is not enough.

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