

The study on food handling related health problems and influencing factors among food handlers in Nallur.

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In recent years, consumption of food from outside has been increasing due to various reasons, such as changing life style, increasing population of working women, etc. Personals, who are handling the food in the above places, play a vital role in the transmission of food-borne diseases.

The study was carried out to find out the food handling related health problems and factors influencing on it among food handlers in Nallur Piradeshiya Sabha area from August to November 2009. One hundred and ninety five food handlers from 52 food establishments were included.

Data were collected by using interviewer administered questionnaire and stool examination for bacterial microbes and parasitological Amoeba-oocyte-cyst. The data was analyzed with the help of SPSS version 17.0.

Only twenty nine (14.8%) were found to be

suffered from one or more than one health problems during the last one year period. The health problems stated by respondents were typhoid (1.5%), diarrhea (2.1%), skin diseases (3.1%), discharge from nose and mouth (2.1%), laceration (6.2%), burn injuries (6.2%) and boils (2.1%). Only one person (0.5%) was found to have parasitic infestation (hook worm) and none of the stool sample was found to be positive for typhoid. Majority of them 175 (89.7%) were studied upto G.C.E.O/L. Most of the food handlers 157(80.5%) have had bad food hygienic practices and 134(68.7%) had bad personal hygiene. The significant association was found between the personal hygiene and illnesses at $p < 0.05$ level.

The study findings further insisted that in order to provide safe food, periodic medical examination along with proper health education for food handlers about personal hygiene and good food practices are inevitable.