Case study B - Conclusions

HANDOUT
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ANSWERS

Investigation findings

Staphylococcus aureus **was isolated from the nasal swab of a food handler who prepared the mayonnaise. After preparation the low-acid mayonnaise had been left in the kitchen at 26°C for around 8 hours. The same strain of *Staphylococcus aureus* was isolated from the mayonnaise and toxin isolated from vomit specimens of ill persons.**

Explanation

The source of the pathogen was the nose of the food handler and the vehicle the mayonnaise. The cause of the outbreak was contamination of the mayonnaise by the food handler and the storage of the mayonnaise for 8 hours at 26°C, which allowed the production of exotoxin. (Contamination and toxin production are the hazards).

Controls

The controls involve the training, instruction and close supervision of staff to ensure they always wash their hands after sneezing or touching their nose. The other important control would be to purchase the mayonnaise or if home-made to prepare it immediately prior to consumption or to store under refrigeration as soon as it has been made.