

## **Food Safety in the Home: Is This Still OK to Eat?**

**Satellite Conference and Live Webcast  
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**Produced by the Alabama Department of Public Health  
Video Communications and Distance Learning Division**

## **Faculty**

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## **Objectives**

- **Understand the need for solid waste control & how public health laws affect home care**
- **Recognize public health concerns**
- **Knowledge of harborages and infestations that can be found in patient homes**
- **List vector borne diseases**

## **Objectives**

- **Learn how to safely store food in the patient's home**
- **Realize how patients can acquire a food borne illness**
- **Know how to check for lead in a patient's home**
- **Describe how mold & mildew can cause health problems**

## **How Many People In The United States Get Sick Each Year From Food They Eat?**

- **76 million people become sick from foodborne illnesses**
- **5,000 people die**

## **Signs and Symptoms of Foodborne Illness**

- **Fever**
- **Vomiting**
- **Diarrhea**
- **Upset stomach**
- **Dehydration-sometimes severe**
- **Paralysis**
- **Meningitis**
- **Death**

## People With A Higher Risk Of Foodborne Illness

- Infants
- Pregnant women
- Young children
- Older adults
- People with weakened immune systems
- Individuals with certain chronic diseases

## Don't Count On These To Test For Food Safety!

- Sight
  - It looks OK
- Smell
  - It doesn't smell 'funny'
- Taste
  - It tastes alright

## Why Gamble With Your Health?

- You can't count on looking, smelling or tasting to tell if a food is bad
- Tasting can be dangerous
  - As few as 10 bacteria can cause some foodborne illnesses
- It takes about ½ hour to 6 weeks to become ill from unsafe foods

## Why Gamble With Your Health?

- You may become sick later even if you feel OK after eating

## 2005 USDA Dietary Guidelines

- Key recommendations for food safety
  - Clean
  - Separate
  - Cool
  - Chill
  - Avoid

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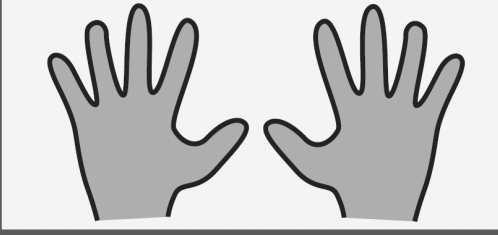
## Recommendation 1: CLEAN



- Wash hands and food-contact surfaces

## Wash Your Hands

### The 10 Most Common Causes of Infection



- Hand washing is the most effective way to stop the spread of illness

## Avoid Spreading Bacteria

- Use paper towels or clean cloths to wipe up kitchen surfaces or spills
- Wash cloths often in the hot cycle of your washing machine and dry in a hot dryer

## Dirty Dishcloths Spread Bacteria

- Wet or damp dishcloths are ideal environments for bacterial growth
- Have a good supply of dishcloths
  - Avoid reusing them before laundry day

## Dirty Dishcloths Spread Bacteria

- There are more germs in the average kitchen than the bathroom
  - Sponges and dishcloths are the worst offenders

## Recommendation 2: SEPARATE



- Separate, raw, cooked, and ready-to-eat foods while shopping, preparing or storing foods

## Separate When Grocery Shopping

- Keep meat, poultry, and seafood separate from other foods in the shopping card
  - Blood doesn't drip on fruits, vegetables or other foods
- Shop for meats, milk, eggs, frozen foods last

## Separate When Grocery Shopping

- After shopping go home right away and put food into the refrigerator or freezer immediately
  - Eggs go into the refrigerator, NOT the door

## Separate Raw and Cooked Foods During Preparation

- Use different cutting boards
  - One for raw meats
  - One for produce
- Use clean plates
  - NEVER serve foods on plates that previously held raw meats
    - Unless washed in hot, soapy water

## Recommendation 3: COOK



- Cook foods to safe temperatures to kill microorganisms

## For More Information About Using Food Thermometers

*"Is it done yet?"*

You can't tell by *looking*. Use a **food thermometer** to be sure.

USDA Recommended Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures



Steaks & Roasts	Fish	Pork	Ground Beef	Egg Dishes	Chicken Breasts	Whole Poultry
145 °F	145 °F	160 °F	160 °F	160 °F	165 °F	165 °F

[www.IsItDoneYet.gov](http://www.IsItDoneYet.gov)

USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline: 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854)

## Recommendation 4: CHILL



- Chill (refrigerate) perishable foods promptly and defrost foods properly

## The Two-Hour Rule

- Refrigerate perishable foods so **TOTAL** time at room temperature is less than two hours
  - One hour when temperature is about 90 degrees Fahrenheit

## The Two-Hour Rule

- Perishable foods include
  - Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu
  - Dairy products
  - Pasta, rice, cooked vegetables
  - Fresh, peeled/cut fruits and vegetables

## Danger Zone

- Bacteria multiply rapidly between 41 and 135 degrees Fahrenheit



## How To Be Cool – Part 1

- Cool food in shallow containers
  - Limit depth of food to 2 inches or less
- Place very hot foods on a rack at room temperature for about 20 minutes before refrigeration

## How To Be Cool – Part 2

- It's ok to refrigerate foods while they're still warm
  - Leave container cover slightly cracked until the food has cooled

## How To Keep Foods Cool If The Power Is Off

- Foods should keep for 1-2 days
- Full refrigerators usually keep foods longer than empty ones
- Keep the door closed as much as possible

## The Thaw Law

- Plan ahead to defrost foods
- The best way to thaw perishable foods is in the refrigerator

### **The Thaw Law**

- When microwave defrosting perishable food
  - Cook food immediately after thawing
  - Some parts of the food can start to cook during microwave defrosting
  - Any bacteria present wouldn't have been destroyed and may begin to grow

### **Microwave Your Food In Safe Containers**

- Do use
  - Microwave safe dishes
  - Wax paper
  - Cooking bags
  - White microwave-safe paper towels

### **Microwave Your Food In Safe Containers**

- Do use
  - Plastic wrap
    - Placed loosely
    - Never directly touches food

### **Microwave Your Food In Safe Containers**

- Don't use
  - Take-out containers
  - Plastic storage containers like margarine tubs, whipped topping bowls
  - Other one-time use containers

### **Recommendation 5: AVOID**

- Raw (unpasteurized) milk or milk products
- Raw or partially cooked eggs and foods containing raw eggs
- Raw and undercooked meat and poultry
- Unpasteurized juices
- Raw sprouts

### **Safe Food Handling At Home: Cleaning Fruits & Vegetables**

- Remove and discard outer leaves
- Rinse under clean, running water just before preparing or eating
- Rub briskly – scrubbing with a clean brush or hands – to remove dirt and surface microorganisms
- Don't use soap or detergent

### **Safe Food Handling At Home: Cleaning Fruits & Vegetables**

- After washing, dry with a clean cloth or paper towel
- Moisture left on produce may promote survival and growth of microorganisms
  - Drying is critical if food won't be eaten or cooked right away
- Cut away bruised & damaged areas

### **Wash This Produce, Too!**

- Bacteria on the outside of fruits can be transferred to the inside when fruit is peeled or cut
- Wash fruits – such as cantaloupe and other melons – under running water

### **Safe Food Handling At Home: Read Labels**

- Read labels on bagged produce to determine if it's ready-to-eat
- Ready-to-eat, pre-washed, bagged produce can be
  - Used without further washing if kept refrigerated
  - Used by "use-by" date

### **Safe Food Handling At Home: Avoid Washing Raw Meat & Poultry**

- Do not wash raw meat and poultry
  - Washing increases the danger of cross-contamination, spreading bacteria on the surface of meat and poultry to ready-to-eat foods, kitchen utensils and counter surfaces

### **Safe Food Handling At Home: Refrigerator Storage**

- Store raw meat, poultry and seafood on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator so juices don't drip onto other foods
- Label leftovers with dates
- Routinely clean out refrigerator

### **Specific Group Recommendations**

- Pregnant women, older adults and the immunocompromised
  - Only eat deli meats and frankfurters that have been reheated to steaming hot to avoid the risk of listeriosis

## **Remember**

- **When in doubt... toss it out!**