



Protect Yourself from Foodborne Illness

Take steps to protect yourself and your family from getting a foodborne illness

- Pay attention to news reports about contaminated foods and do not eat anything under suspicion
- Wash produce well, especially if it will be eaten raw. Produce with inedible peels (like melons) should be washed too because this prevents pathogens on the peel from contaminating the flesh inside
- Before and after handling food, wash your hands with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds – about the time it takes to sing “Happy Birthday” twice!
- Use one cutting board and set of utensils for raw meat, fish, and poultry; and another one just for produce
- Use hot, soapy water to wash cutting boards, dishes, and utensils that have come into contact with raw meat, fish, eggs, and poultry
- Separate raw meat, seafood, eggs, and poultry from other foods in your shopping cart, grocery bags and the refrigerator
- Cook meat, seafood, and poultry adequately. Take special care with ground meat, which is especially likely to harbor pathogens. Eggs should be cooked until the yolk is firm
- Do not place cooked meat, seafood, eggs, or poultry on the same plate that held the raw version
- Store food properly. When you buy raw meat, seafood, eggs, and poultry, refrigerate them as soon as you get home from the store
- Refrigerate foods within two hours of cooking. Never allow meat, poultry, seafood, eggs or other foods that require refrigeration to sit out for more than two hours
- Keep your refrigerator temperature at or below 40 degrees F and your freezer below 0 degrees F, because cold temperature help stop organisms from multiplying
- If a restaurant serves you undercooked meat (especially hamburger or chicken), send it back for more cooking. Ask that all other foods on the plate be replaced too
- Avoid unpasteurized milk and other dairy products as well as unpasteurized juices
- Don't eat food that is spoiled, moldy, or smelly. If in doubt, throw it out
- Discard old food. Check package labels for recommended storage time limits