



Wellness Buddy Tip

Providing guidance and support to make the "healthy choice the easy choice."

Chronic Disease Health Promotion and Education Program
Jackson County Health Department

Preventing Foodborne Illness

Foodborne illness — upset stomach, flu or even "some kind of bug" is caused by eating or drinking contaminated foods or beverages.

Anyone can get foodborne illness. Some persons are at more at risk than others. Pregnant women, the elderly, and those individuals with weakened immune systems should be careful not to consume undercooked animal products. They should avoid soft French style cheeses, pates, uncooked hot dogs and sliced deli meats, alfalfa sprouts and unpasteurized juices.

Also a bottle-fed infant is at higher risk for bacterial infection that can grow in a bottle of warm formula if it is left at room temperature for many hours. Be sure infant bottles are cleaned and disinfected between each use and that leftover infant formula or juice is not held in the bottle for many hours.

Persons living with liver disease are susceptible to infections found in oysters and should avoid eating raw oysters.

Because bacteria are everywhere, cleanliness is a major factor in preventing foodborne illness. The United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service provides the following steps to safely handle food in the home.

Always wash hands with warm, soapy water

- before handling food,
- after handling food,



- after using the bathroom,
- after changing a diaper,
- after tending to a

sick person,

- After blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing; and, after handling pets.

If your hands have any kind of skin abrasion or infection, always use clean disposable gloves. Wash hands (gloved or not) with warm, soapy water.

Thoroughly wash with hot, soapy water all surfaces that come in contact with raw meat, poultry, fish, and eggs before moving on to the next step in food preparation. Consider using paper towels to clean kitchen surfaces. If you use dishcloths, wash them often in the hot cycle of your washing machine. Keep other surfaces, such as faucets and counter tops, clean by washing with hot, soapy water.

To keep cutting boards clean, wash them in hot, soapy water after each use; then rinse and air or pat dry with clean paper towels. Cutting boards can be sanitized with a solution of 1 tablespoon unscented, liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of water. Flood the surface with the bleach solution and allow it to stand for several minutes; then rinse and air or pat dry with clean paper towels.

Non-porous acrylic, plastic, glass, solid wood boards can

be washed in a dishwasher (laminated boards may crack and split). Even plastic boards wear out over time. Once cutting boards become excessively worn or develop hard-to-clean grooves, replace them.

Don't use the same platter and utensils that held the raw product to serve the cooked product. Any bacteria present in the raw meat or juices can contaminate the safely cooked product. Serve cooked products on clean plates, using clean utensils and clean hands.

When using a food thermometer, it is important to wash the probe after each use with hot, soapy water before reinserting it into a food.

Keep pets, household cleaners, and other chemicals away from food and surfaces used for food.

When picnicking or cooking outdoors, take plenty of clean utensils. Pack clean, dry, and wet and soapy cloths for cleaning surfaces and hands.

Thaw foods in the refrigerator.

Marinate foods in the refrigerator.

Do not leave perishable foods like meats, egg dishes, poultry and sauces at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

Cook and reheat foods thoroughly and without interruption.

Serve foods safely by keeping cold foods cold (below 40°F) and hot foods hot (above 140°F).

Volume 5, Issue 1

August 26, 2010

Special points of interest:

4 Simple Food Safety Messages

- *Clean: Wash hands and surfaces often*
- *Separate: Don't contaminate*
- *Cook: Cook to proper temperatures*
- *Chill: Refrigerate promptly*



Contact Information

Mary Beth Gurganus, LD/N

3045 4th Street

P O Box 310

Marianna, FL 32447

Phone: 850-526-2412 ext 282

Fax: 850-482-9564

Email: WellnessBuddy@doh.state.fl.us

Website: www.jacksonchd.org