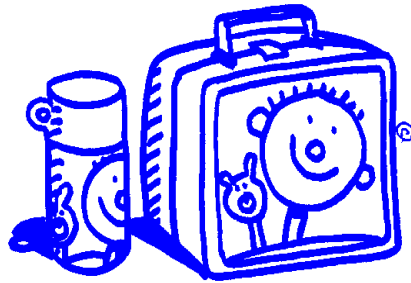


Safe Food for Children



Thank you for your interest in **Safe Food for Children**. This nutritional educational packet contains a 10 page study guide, as well as a self test/training certificate, which fulfills two hours of training. This certificate is only valid if the self-test on the backside is completed. You are expected to review the enclosed materials thoroughly prior to completing the self-test. Answers to all questions are contained in the accompanying study guide.

Remember, the training certificate is only valid after review of the enclosed materials and completion of the self test.

If you have any questions as to the proper use of this packet, please contact the ICCB office and we will be glad to assist you.

Patti A. Elste
Nutrition Director
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Safe Food for Children

Infectious diseases spread through food or beverages are a common, distressing, and sometimes life-threatening problem for millions of people in the United States and around the world. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates 76 million people suffer food borne illnesses each year in the United States, accounting for 325,000 hospitalizations and more than 5,000 deaths.

Food borne disease is extremely costly. Health experts estimate that the yearly cost of all food borne diseases in this country is 5 to 6 billion dollars in direct medical expenses and lost productivity. Infections with the bacteria Salmonella alone account for \$1 billion yearly in direct and indirect medical costs.

There are more than 250 known food borne diseases. They can be caused by bacteria, viruses, or parasites. Natural and manufactured chemicals in food products also can make people sick. Some diseases are caused by toxins (poisons) from the disease-causing organism (germ), others by bodily reactions to the organism itself. People infected with food borne germs may have no symptoms or develop symptoms ranging from mild intestinal discomfort to severe dehydration and bloody diarrhea.

Most cases of food borne illnesses are caused by careless or improper food handling at home. What we often think is the flu — upset stomach, nausea, stomach cramps, and runny stools — may be caused by eating food with harmful microbes or the poisons they produce. Infected food may show no signs of spoilage. There is a difference between microbes that cause food to spoil — to rot or turn bad —and those that cause illness.

Food spoilage microbes that can cause a change in color or an “off smell” do not cause food borne illness. Improperly handled food can contain both kinds of microbes. Meat, milk, or eggs are the foods most often involved in food borne illness.

Knowing the basics of safe food handling is extremely important when caring for children in your home. Also, teaching children the importance of safe food handling cannot start too early. As children grow they become more curious about their environment and now is an opportune time to train them in the art of food safety and sanitation. As with most skills, those learned at a young age seem to have a lasting impact.

The following topics should be helpful as you model these principles and begin to teach the children how to keep the food they eat on a daily basis free from the potential of causing a food borne illness.

- ✓ Clean Hands for Healthy Children
- ✓ Safe Grocery Shopping
- ✓ Safe Food Handling
- ✓ Safe Food Storage
- ✓ A Clean Kitchen



Clean Hands for Healthy Children

What are *microbes?

Microbes (short for micro-organisms) include many bacteria, viruses and parasites. Often called germs, many different kinds of microbes can make people sick. Microbes are everywhere. Although they can only be seen through a microscope; microbes are part of our daily lives. Billions of microbes grow and live on and in our bodies every day. Some are even necessary for good health. Most microbes grow best in warm, moist places. They like to live in people's mouths, noses, intestinal tracts and on hands. They cling to hair and hide under fingernails and in the small folds of our skin. Prevent spreading microbes by handling food safely and following guides for washing hands. Start washing the right way! Microbes are everywhere and they like to live on unclean hands. Good hand washing habits decrease your chance for illness.

What to teach children about washing hands

Parents and child care providers should set good examples by washing their hands frequently and encouraging children to do the same. Children will probably want to know why they need to wash their hands.

- Microbes spread easily. Microbes can live on dry surfaces for hours and on moist surfaces for up to three days. Hands are often warm and moist — they're a great place for microbes to live. Hands help microbes to move from one surface to another and from one person to another.
- Explain that microbes can make people sick even though they are too tiny to be seen. Point out fingernails, lines, cracks and wrinkles on hands where dirt and microbes like to hide. Explain that all these places should be washed carefully. Show children the right way to wash their hands as explained in these guidelines.
- When we wash our hands correctly we reduce the chances of getting sick. Washing hands help us stay healthy. Studies have shown that adults and children who wash their hands at least 5 times per day have fewer colds throughout the course of a year.

Here's how to wash hands:

1. Use warm water and soap to create a sudsy lather on your hands.
2. Rub hands together for about half a minute.
3. Wash hands thoroughly. Be sure the soap suds get in between fingers and around finger nails. Rinse the suds off your hands with warm water.
4. Finally, dry hands completely on clean paper towels or your own personal towel. Cloth towels that others have used may spread illnesses.

When should we wash our hands?

Be sure you and children in your care wash hands with soap and warm water at these times:

- before preparing and eating food,
- after handling raw meat, fish, poultry or eggs,
- after touching pets,
- after playing in dirt or sand or with shared toys,

- after using bathroom facilities,
- after changing diapers,
- after blowing your nose, coughing,
- after sneezing on your hands,
- after touching a cut or open sore.

Warning

Children should be watched carefully so that they do not burn their hands under hot running water. To avoid a possibly unsafe situation, turn hot water heater to 120° F, or between low and medium.



On Your Mark, Get Set, Go
Shopping safely for groceries

To keep your food safe, always select and handle food items carefully in the grocery store. Here are some things to watch out for when shopping.

1. Look for cans without dents, cracks or bulging lids.
2. Avoid opened, torn or damaged packages.
3. Check "Use-by-date."
4. Buy only the freshest fruits and vegetables.
5. Select fresh red meat, poultry and fish.
6. Select cold refrigerated foods and frozen foods.
7. Buy prepared foods from delis and salad bars only if cold foods are cold and hot foods are hot.
8. Open egg cartons to check for cracked eggs.
9. Pick up frozen foods last.

How to bring groceries home

1. Do not let raw chicken, fish and meat drip on other foods. Wrap in separate plastic bags.
2. Put frozen foods together in plastic bags to keep cold.
3. Ready-to-eat fresh foods should not touch meat, poultry, fish or anything that would contaminate them.
4. During hot weather and if it will take you an hour or more to get home, bring along a chilled cooler in which to pack cold and frozen foods so they do not spoil on the way home.

Here's how to tell if a store is clean and sells safe food

When choosing where to buy food, here is a checklist of what to look for.

- Look for signs of cleanliness.
- Check the floors, food cases, produce counter, meat cutting areas, etc.
- Check the store thermometers. They should be between 35°- 40°F in refrigerators and at 0°F or lower in frozen food cases.
- The room temperature of the store should be cool in hot weather.
- The store should provide employees and customers the appropriate scoops, spoons, serving tongs or tissues to handle bulk foods, baked goods, deli items and salad bar selections.
- The newest stock is placed behind older items.
- Cleaning supplies, car products and other non-food items are located away from food and in separate sections of the store.
- Ready-to-eat-meats are separated from raw meat, poultry and fish.

What do product dates mean on packages?

Many products have dates on them even though, at this time, they are optional. The date stamped on the product packages may indicate the product freshness and can serve as a guide to safe storage.

A **Sell by** date tells grocers and consumers how long the product should be kept for sale on the shelf. The product may still be safe to eat after the sell by date passes.

A **Use by** date indicates how long the product will retain top eating quality after it is purchased. Throw it away if the use by date is past to insure maximum safety.

How to be a good shopper

Be a safe and considerate food shopper. Follow these suggestions to help the store keep food safe.

1. Don't open packages or cartons, except egg cartons to check for cracked eggs.
2. Return unwanted items to their proper place.
3. Report any spoiled or leaking container to the management.
4. Use equipment or papers to pick up bulk foods.

A little care on your part lowers food costs and keeps food safe for everyone.



Microbe Foiled Again!
Safe Food Handling

You can be a safe cook Most of us think our food is safe to eat. Usually it is. But sometimes food can become infected with microbes. When we eat it, we can get sick. While you prepare and serve foods, you can take many precautions to keep them safe so that they do not cause sicknesses.

Two ways to stop food-borne illnesses are proper cooking and cooling.

Remember these three easy, safe food rules:

1. Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.
2. Thoroughly cook meat, fish, poultry, and eggs.
3. Keep equipment, hands, and food clean.

Prepare food properly

Follow these steps to protect uncooked food.

- ▶ Do not thaw food at room temperature. Instead, thaw in the refrigerator. It can also be thawed in a microwave oven, but cook it right afterward. If poultry is in a sealed plastic bag, it can be placed in cold water which should be changed every 30 minutes.
- ▶ Do not taste any raw or partially cooked animal products.
- ▶ Do not let juices from uncooked meat, poultry or fish touch any other foods.
- ▶ Marinate raw products in the refrigerator, not on a counter. Do not reuse marinade. Throw it out.
- ▶ After touching or handling raw meat, fish or poultry, wash hands and equipment thoroughly before preparing other food. Best bet: dry off with paper towels instead of cloth towels.

Cook the smart way

- ▶ Learn how to cook food completely. Be sure hot foods are hot, not lukewarm.
- ▶ Use a meat thermometer to judge the safe internal temperature of meat and poultry more than 2 inches thick. Beef, pork, fish and eggs should be at least 160° F and poultry 180° F.
- ▶ Meat or poultry less than 2 inches thick are done when juices are clear and the center is not pink or rare.
- ▶ Fish is done when it flakes with a fork. Never partly cook food to finish grilling or roasting later.
- ▶ Salmonella, a bacteria that causes food poisoning, likes to grow inside fresh, unbroken eggs. To avoid salmonella, cook fresh eggs completely, or use prepackaged pasteurized eggs. Eat whole eggs only when yolks are cooked solid and not runny.
- ▶ Generally, cook frozen foods longer than thawed foods — usually 1½ times longer.
- ▶ Keep cold foods cold.

Serve it safe

Be sure you serve food safely. Here are some ways to do so:

- ▶ Keep hot foods at a temperature above 140°F.
- ▶ Serve cooked foods on clean plates with clean utensils.

- ▶ Never put food on unclean plates used for raw foods.
- ▶ When the temperature is 85° F or warmer, cooked foods should be out for no longer than one hour. Otherwise, do not leave them out for more than two hours.

Special microwave tips

A microwave oven can help cook food quickly. But it has a food safety disadvantage. It sometimes leaves cold spots in food where microbes may survive. To cook food thoroughly in a microwave oven:

- ▶ Cover food with lids or wax paper so steam can complete the cooking.
- ▶ Help food cook evenly. Use a rotating microwave pad or stop cooking often to rotate dishes and stir foods.
- ▶ Follow recipe standing times before serving.
- ▶ Check food for doneness with a temperature probe or thermometer. Insert at several spots.
- ▶ Cut foods into the same size and shape to cook more evenly.



Microbe Family Get Away! Safe Food Storage

What you should know about storing food

What do we do with food we've brought home from the grocery store or that is leftover from a meal or snack? Following are tips on how to properly store food to save you time and money, as well as keep it safe. Remember these tips for smart and easy cold storage. Growth of microbes is slowed, not stopped, in cold storage. In time, the quality of food goes down. Check a food storage chart to see how long each item should be kept.

1. To keep microbes in check, the refrigerator temperature should be between 32° and 40°F. Generally, keep the refrigerator as cold as possible without freezing milk or lettuce.
2. To reduce moisture loss and keep microbes out of refrigerated foods, cover them with foil, plastic wrap, plastic bags or store in airtight containers.
3. Place packages of raw meat, poultry or fish on a plate before refrigerating so juices won't drip on other food. Raw juices often contain microbes which could get on other foods.
4. Refrigerate food immediately after the meal is over, even if it is still hot.
5. Only store food in plastic bags, wraps and containers meant to be used for food.
6. Freezing is the best way to keep the fresh-like qualities of many foods. Your freezer should not run higher than 0°F.

7. A freezer keeps food best when it is nearly full.
8. Food freezes faster in small portions.
9. To decrease moisture loss and “freezer burn,” wrap food in heavy-duty foil, freezer storage bags, freezer paper or store in plastic containers with tight lids.
10. Freeze meat, poultry or fish immediately if it will not be used within a few days.
Note: The clear wrap on meats bought in stores lets air in. If you plan to freeze the meat for more than 2 weeks, rewrap it in freezer paper or storage bags.
11. Never allow the printed side of plastic bags, such as bread wrappers, to touch food.
12. Check your stock for outdated food every few days.
13. Use an appliance thermometer to check refrigerator and freezer temperatures.
14. Store canned and packaged goods on dry, clean, cool shelves.
15. Arrange the cupboard so that the oldest products are used first.
16. Store foods away from appliances which produce heat.
17. Store food in tightly closed containers to keep insects out and protect the flavor.
18. For best quality, use foods within times recommended on a food storage chart.
19. You may be able to tell if a canned food is dangerous to eat by how it looks.
Throw away bulging or rusty cans.
Check dented cans carefully.
Throw away cans that are leaking.
Don't buy or store damaged cans.

Taking care of leftovers: Package & Date Properly

- ▶ Leftovers should be refrigerated or frozen promptly after meals.
- ▶ Divide large amounts into small, shallow containers for quick cooling.
- ▶ Date packages and use within the times recommended on food storage chart.
- ▶ It's best to store food in tightly covered containers.
- ▶ Do not store food in dishes or pottery which you suspect may have lead paint on it. Imported dishes or those made by a local potter may be glazed with a type of lead paint.

WARNING:

Never taste food that looks or smells strange, or has been stored too long — just throw it out.

When in doubt, throw it out.



Clean Kitchen Savvy

How to clean up your kitchen

Preparing and eating food at home saves money, can be an enjoyable and creative opportunity, and can help you provide healthy, well-balanced meals for yourself and your children. But, when you prepare and eat food at home, you also will have dirty glasses, dishes, towels, equipment, and kitchen surfaces to clean afterward. You must thoroughly clean your kitchen to stop microbes from growing on these surfaces. Sanitary work habits, proper cleansers, and easy-to-clean equipment help insure that your kitchen is not contaminated and will be safe for preparing the next snack or meal.

How to wash dishes

If you wash the dishes by hand —

- ▶ Wash and rinse waters should be as hot as they can be. Wear rubber gloves to protect your hands.
- ▶ Wash lightly soiled items first.
- ▶ Generally, wash dishes in the following order:
glasses, silverware, plates, serving dishes, and, finally, pots and pans.
- ▶ Change wash water and rinse water when they become cool or look or feel greasy.
- ▶ Allow dishes and utensils to air dry instead of drying with towels. Towels may be unclean and may actually help harmful microbes to spread.

In a dishwasher —

- ▶ To thoroughly clean dishes, a dishwasher must be properly loaded and be supplied with hot water and the right detergent. If possible, use a dishwasher that heats water to 140 degrees F. Place dirty sides of dishes facing the water spray. Be sure large items do not shield small ones. Glasses, cups, and bowls should be placed bottoms up. Use the recommended amount of automatic dishwasher detergent.
- ▶ “Clean or dirty?” Keep the door latched until you’re ready to put dishes away.

Good tips for cleaning your kitchen

- ▶ Use separate clean cloths or paper towels for drying hands.
- ▶ Use separate cloths or paper towels for wiping up spills from the floor.
- ▶ Wash all towels, cloths, and sponges often. Replace sponges every few weeks.
- ▶ Wipe off can lids before opening to remove dust, etc.
- ▶ Use easy-to-clean equipment

- ▶ Use dishes and utensils that are in good condition. Cracked wooden spoons, chipped dishes, etc., are good places for microbes to grow. Therefore, throw away such broken equipment.
- ▶ Use marble, plastic, or any non-porous cutting board rather than a wooden one. Microbes can hide in grooves or cuts in wooden boards.
- ▶ Use pots and pans with smooth surfaces and rounded corners.

Keep equipment clean

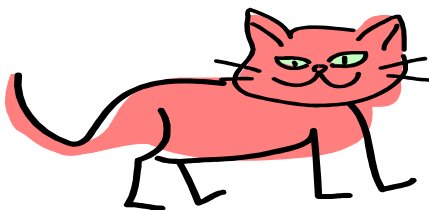
- ▶ Clean your can opener often. Microbes collect and grow there.
- ▶ If you use a wooden cutting board, clean it with a sturdy brush and a solution of two tablespoons of bleach per gallon of water.
- ▶ To prevent mold growth, keep the inside of your refrigerator clean. Wash with a solution of one tablespoon of baking soda per quart of water. Rinse and dry. Wipe off rubber gaskets with a solution of three tablespoons of bleach per quart of water. When warming food in a microwave oven, cover the dish it is in with a paper towel, wax paper or dish cover to prevent splatters. If the inside of the microwave is not clean, wash quickly with hot, soapy water.

WARNING:

Store cleaning supplies and insect killers where children cannot reach them.

Keep all surfaces clean Microbes are easily moved from one surface to another. Therefore, be sure you keep kitchen countertops, sinks, dining table and chairs, and floors clean.

Keep pets and pests out of the kitchen. They spread microbes.



CREDIT:

Safe Food for Children: A series of lessons for parents and child care providers.

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