

Be a Food Safety Explorer Don't Let the Bacteria Grow.



The Basics: Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill

You can help prevent food poisoning from bacteria and viruses by following four simple steps when you prepare food:

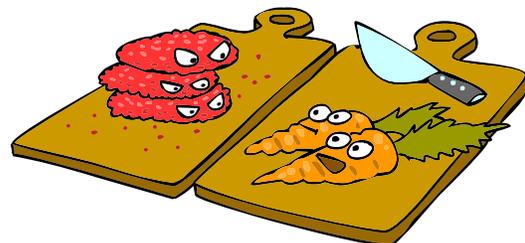
CLEAN: Wash hands and countertops oftens

- Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after you touch food.
- Items that touched food like cutting boards, dishes, silverware, and counter tops need to be washed with hot soapy water. Wash before and after each food item and those nasty bacteria won't have a chance to grow.
- Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water.
- If you have a vegetable scrubber, you can give an extra scrub to fruits and vegetables that have firm skins. Scrub under running tap water.



SEPARATE: Don't mix raw with cooked!

- Separate raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs from other foods.
- Use one cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry and seafood.
- Keep raw foods separate from cooked foods. Don't use the same plate.



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COOK: Cook foods to the right temperature

- Use a food thermometer which measures the inside temperature of cooked meat, poultry and egg dishes. A thermometer helps you cook foods to a safe temperature.
- Cook eggs until the yolk and white are firm, not runny. Avoid using recipes in which eggs stay raw or only partially cooked.
- Make sure there are no cold spots in food (where bacteria can live) when cooking in a microwave oven. For best results, rotate the dish once or twice during cooking.



CHILL: Refrigerate right away - don't wait.

- Refrigerate or freeze meat, poultry, eggs and other perishables as soon as you get them home from the store.
- Never let raw meat, poultry, eggs, cooked food or cut fresh fruits or vegetables sit at room temperature more than two hours. Put them in a container in the refrigerator or freezer with a label and date .
- Food must be kept at a safe temperature when defrosting it. There are three safe ways to defrost food: in the refrigerator, in cold water, and in the microwave. Food thawed in cold water or in the microwave should be cooked immediately.
- Always marinate food in the refrigerator.
- Don't forget to throw out food that has been in the refrigerator for more than four days.

