



September 2017

National Food Safety Month

One in six Americans get sick from food poisoning each year, sending more than 100,000 of them to the hospital.

Handling Food Safely

You can't see, smell, or taste harmful bacteria that may cause illness. Follow these four steps to keep food safe:

1. Clean - Wash hands and surfaces often. Bacteria that can cause illness are able to survive in many places around your kitchen, including your hands, utensils, counters and cutting boards.



- Wash your hands with warm, soapy water for **20 seconds** before and after handling food.
- Clean cutting boards, counters, knives, dishes, etc., with hot, soapy water after preparing each food item.
- Sanitize cutting boards with a solution of 1 tablespoon of bleach per gallon of water. Replace boards once they develop hard-to clean grooves.
- Wash fruits and veggies with cold water before using.
- Do not rinse meat or poultry, which can spread bacteria. Any bacteria on meat when it comes out of the package will die during cooking.

2. Separate - Don't cross-contaminate! Raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs can spread bacteria to ready-to-eat foods - unless kept separate.

- Separate raw, cooked, and ready-to-eat foods while shopping, preparing, or storing.
- Never place cooked food on a plate which previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood.
- Use separate cutting boards for raw meat and produce to avoid cross-contamination.

3. Cook - The right temperature. Bacteria that cause food poisoning multiply quickly at room temperature.

- Cooked food is safe only after it's been heated to a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria.
- Use a food thermometer to measure temperature. Color and texture alone won't tell you whether your food is done.



4. Chill - Refrigerate promptly. Bacteria can multiply rapidly in any perishable food left at room temperature for more than 2 hours. If the temperature is 90 °F or higher, cut that time down to one hour!

- Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared foods, and leftovers to avoid the "danger zone" (between 40 and 140°F).
- Check the temperature in your refrigerator and freezer to ensure they are keeping food cold enough.



Thawing Frozen Foods

There are three ways to thaw foods safely; **none of these methods involve the kitchen counter:**

In the Refrigerator: The safest way to thaw - take food from the freezer and place on a plate/pan to catch any juices that may leak while thawing. If fully defrosted in the fridge, it can be refrozen before or after cooking.

In Cold Water: To thaw faster, put frozen package in a watertight plastic bag and submerge in cold water; change the water every 30 minutes. Cold water slows bacteria growing in the thawed portions of the meat while the inner areas are still thawing. Once thawed, **cook immediately.**

In the Microwave: Follow the instructions from the oven's manufacturer or owner's manual. **Cook immediately after thawing in the microwave.**

Tech Corner Is My Food Safe?

This ad-free app has many useful features including:

- ◆ Safe cooking temperature guide for a wide variety of food items.
- ◆ Answers to all of your food safety questions to help reduce your risk of food poisoning.
- ◆ With this handy app and a food thermometer, you'll never need to guess if your food is cooked to a safe temperature.
- ◆ Free for Apple or Android.



Foodborne Illness: Know the Signs and Symptoms . . . and Take Action

Most people recover from food poisoning without any lasting effects. For some, however, the effects can be devastating and even deadly. Some of these are kidney failure, chronic arthritis and brain and nerve damage. Approximately 3,000 people die each year in the United States of illnesses associated with food poisoning.

Signs and symptoms of foodborne illness range from upset stomach, diarrhea, fever, vomiting, abdominal cramps, and dehydration to more severe illness — even death. If you become ill and believe your illness is due to a food product:

Seek treatment as necessary.

- ◆ Contact your doctor — especially if symptoms persist or become severe (bloody diarrhea, excessive nausea and vomiting, or high fever).
- ◆ For victims in an at-risk group (pregnant women and their unborn babies, newborns, young children, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems), seek medical care immediately.

Call your local health department if the suspect food was served at a large gathering, at a restaurant or other food service facility, or if it is a commercial product.



Whole Grains: Hearty Options for a Healthy Diet

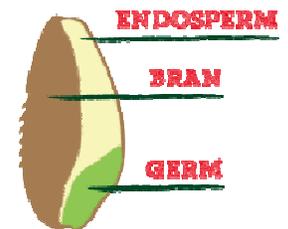
All types of grains are good sources of complex carbohydrates and some key vitamins and minerals, but whole grains — the healthiest kinds of grains — are an especially important part of a healthy diet.

Grains are naturally high in fiber, helping you feel full and satisfied, which makes it easier to maintain a healthy weight. Whole grains also lower the risk of heart disease, diabetes, certain cancers and other health problems.

Also called cereals, grains and whole grains are the seeds of grasses grown for food. Grains and whole grains come in many shapes and sizes, from large kernels of popcorn to small quinoa seeds.

Whole grains are:

- ◆ Either in their whole form or ground into flour, keeping all parts of the seed (bran, germ and endosperm).
- ◆ A better sources of fiber and other important nutrients, such as B vitamins, iron, folate, selenium, potassium and magnesium than other types of grains.
- ◆ Either single foods, such as brown rice and popcorn, or ingredients in products, such as buckwheat in pancakes or whole-wheat flour in bread.



Less healthy types of grains:

Refined grains. Refined grains have had the health germ and bran removed, giving them a finer texture and extending their shelf life. What remains is just the starchy part.

- ◆ The refining process also removes many nutrients, including fiber.
- ◆ Refined grains include white flour, white rice and white bread. Many breads, cereals, crackers, desserts and pastries are made with refined grains.
- ◆ **Enriched grains** are refined grains that have had some of the nutrients lost during processing, such as B vitamins, added back in. Only a small number of nutrients lost during processing are put back.
- ◆ **Fortifying** means adding in nutrients that don't occur naturally in the food.
- ◆ Most refined grains are enriched, and many enriched grains also are fortified with other vitamins and minerals, such as folic acid and iron. Whole grains may or may not be fortified.

Choosing whole grains

Make at least half the grains in your diet whole grains. Use whole-grain versions of rice, bread, cereal, flour and pasta. Many whole-grain foods, including a variety of breads, pastas and cereals, are ready to eat.



Examples of whole grains: Barley, Brown rice, Buckwheat, Bulgur (cracked wheat), Oatmeal, Popcorn, Millet, Whole-wheat bread, pasta or crackers.

It's not always easy to tell what kind of grains a product has, especially bread. For instance, a brown bread isn't necessarily whole wheat — the brown hue may come from added coloring.

Check the product label or the Nutrition Facts panel. Look for the word "whole" on the package, and make sure whole grains appear among the first items in the ingredient list.