

## Keep Family Food Safe

One of the best ways to teach food safety to children is to practice safe food methods and talk about why it is being practiced. Have conversations about how bacteria are invisible. You can't smell, see or taste them, yet they can spread everywhere in your kitchen and can make you very sick. When it comes to preventing foodborne illness, follow these four simple steps.

### CLEAN

Careful hand washing is one of the best ways to stop germs from spreading. **Make proper hand washing a family habit.**

*Teach your child when to wash hands:*

- After using the bathroom, coughing, sneezing, handling garbage, and playing outside.
- Before eating, and before and after handling or preparing raw meat, poultry, eggs and seafood.
- Whenever hands look dirty.

*Teach your child how to wash hands:*

- Wet your hands and apply liquid, bar, or powder soap.
- Rub hands together vigorously to make a lather and scrub all surfaces.
- Continue for 20 seconds! It takes that long for the soap and scrubbing action to dislodge and remove stubborn germs. Use a timer or sing "Happy Birthday" all the way through – twice!
- Rinse hands well under running water.



- Dry your hands using a paper towel or clean hand towel.
- If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet.

**Remember:** *If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based wipe or hand gel!*

**Wash kitchen utensils, dishes, counter tops and surfaces. Let your child help by adding dish soap to the water.**



- Wash cutting boards and counters in hot, soapy water, each time they're used.
- Consider cleaning kitchen surfaces with paper towels; toss them when you're done.
- If using cloth towels wash often in the hot cycle of your washing machine.
- If using sponges for kitchen clean up, microwave moist sponge each evening for 30 seconds or run through the dishwasher daily.
- Make cleaning fun with colorful towels.

**Wash fresh fruits and vegetables before preparing or eating. Let your child scrub.**

- Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running water including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten. Do not use soap.
- Scrub firm skin fruits and vegetables, such as oranges and melons, with a vegetable brush before cutting and serving.

## SEPARATE

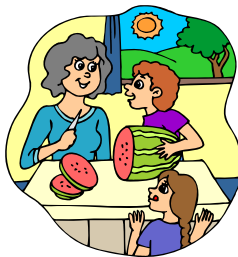
**Harmful bacteria can spread from one food to another, from one surface to another or from a food to a surface. Show your child how to separate raw meat, poultry, and fish from other foods.**

- Separate raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs from other food in your grocery cart, grocery bags and refrigerator.
- Keep one cutting board for fresh produce and ready-to-eat foods, and one for raw meat, poultry, and seafood.
- Wash cutting boards and knives with soap and water to remove bacteria, then rinse with clean water.
- After cleaning, sanitize cutting boards and food preparation surfaces with a bleach solution: 1 teaspoon bleach in 4 cups water.
- Keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood wrapped, in sealed containers or plastic bags, and place on a plate or in a bowl so juices won't drip out or drip on other foods.
- Wash anything (including your hands) that touches raw meat, poultry, or seafood before handling other food.
- Never put cooked food on the same plate or cutting board that held raw food – unless you wash it first.

## CHILL

**Cold temperatures keep bacteria from growing and multiplying. Your child can help keep foods cold.**

- Make sure the refrigerator door closes. Together check the temperature: refrigerator—below 40°F; freezer—below 0°F.
- Thaw frozen food in the refrigerator or microwave oven, not on the counter.
- Freeze or refrigerate leftovers and other cooked foods within two hours of cooking.
- Put leftovers in small, shallow containers to cool faster and use within 2-4 days.



- When you shop, buy perishable foods such as dairy products, fresh meat, and hot cooked foods at the end of your shopping trip. Refrigerate foods as soon as possible to extend their storage life.
- Don't leave perishable foods out for more than two hours.
- If preparing picnic foods, be sure to include an ice pack to keep cold foods cold.

## COOK

**To kill food-borne bacteria that can make you sick, cook food long enough and at a high enough temperature for that food. Show your child how carefully you check.**

- Cook to the following temperatures:

Beef, venison, lamb, steaks, & roasts	145°F
Pork roasts and chops	160°F
Ground beef, venison or pork	160°F
Poultry	165°F
Fish	145°F
- Cook eggs until yolks and whites are firm. Do not use recipes in which eggs are not cooked and do not let your child taste raw dough that contains eggs.
- Reheat leftovers to at least 165°F (steaming hot).
- After each use, wash the tip of your food thermometer with hot, soapy water. Wiping with a towel isn't enough.
- Be sure your microwaved food has no cold spots. Turn (by hand or turntable) and stir while food cooks.

### References:

- Ingham, B. (2005). *Food safety in your home*. Retrieved July 15, 2009, from [www.foodsafetyinyourhome.org](http://www.foodsafetyinyourhome.org)
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