

Super Seniors News **September 2014 Newsletter**

Dear Friends,

This issue of “Super Seniors News” will be dedicated to National Food Safety Month® and Healthy Aging® Month. We will focus on the steps to prevent foodborne illness and tips for healthy aging.

Sincerely,

Jacquelyn W. Gibson

Jacquelyn W. Gibson
Extension Faculty-FCS



The Family & Consumer Science Program and the 4-H Youth Development Program has a New Home!!

New Location: Amelia Earhart Park

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September is “National Food Safety Education Month®”

National Food Safety Education Month® (NFSEM) was created in 1994 by the National Restaurant Association Education Foundation (NRAEF), to heighten awareness of the importance of food safety education.

The food supply in the United States is among the safest in the world — but it can be a source of infection for all persons.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention 48 million persons get sick. 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die from foodborne infection and illness in the United States each year. Many of these people are children, older adults, or have weakened immune systems and may not be able to fight infection normally.

Since foodborne illness can be serious — or even fatal — it is important for you to know and practice safe food handling behaviors to help reduce your risk of getting sick from contaminated food.

Taking care: Handling and Preparing Food Safely

Foodborne pathogens are sneaky. Food that appear completely fine can contain pathogens—disease-causing bacteria, viruses or parasites—that can make you sick. You should never taste a food to determine if it is safe to eat.

As an older adult, it is especially important that you are always careful with food handling and preparation. The easiest way to do this is to follow the four basic steps to food safety.

1. **Clean.** Wash hands and surfaces often.
2. **Separate.** Don't cross-contaminate. Keep raw meat, poultry, eggs, and seafood and their juices away from ready-to-eat foods.
3. **Cook.** Raw meat, poultry, seafood, and egg products need to be cooked to the right temperature. Use a food thermometer to ensure foods have reached a high enough temperature to kill any harmful bacteria that may be present.
4. **Chill.** Refrigerate food promptly. Do not leave food at room temperature for more than two hours --one hour when the temperature is above 90 °F (32.2 °C).

Practice Good Refrigerator Safety Habits



- Set your refrigerator to less than 40 degrees Fahrenheit, use a refrigerator thermometer and check it regularly.
- Use your refrigerator properly by putting perishable food inside as soon as you get home from the store.
- Refrigerate leftovers within two hours. If the food has been outside in temperatures of 90 degrees or warmer, refrigerate leftovers within one hour.
- Store foods in small, shallow containers (2 inches deep or less).
- Discard opened packages of luncheon meats or spreads after three to five days.
- Eat foods by the “use-by” date on the package and if that date has passed, throw it away.
- Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator, under cold running water or in the microwave right before cooking. Do not leave frozen foods on the counter or in the sink to thaw.
- Carefully read food labels while in the store to make sure food is not past its “sell by” date.
- Put raw packaged meat, poultry, or seafood into a plastic bag before placing in the shopping cart so that its juices will not drip on and contaminate other foods.
- Buy only pasteurized milk, cheese, and other dairy products from the refrigerated section. When buying fruit juice from the refrigerated section, be sure that the juice label says pasteurized.
- Purchase eggs in the shell from the refrigerated section of the store. Store the eggs in their original carton in the main part of the refrigerator, not on the door, once you get home.
- Purchase produce that is not bruised or damaged.
- When purchasing canned goods, make sure that they are free of dents, cracks, or bulging lids. Once you are home, remember to clean lids before opening the can.
- Pick up perishable food last, and plan to go directly home from the grocery store.

Source: www.eatright.org



Follow these Safe Food-Handling Practices When Shopping

Food Product Dating



- A “**Sell-By**” date tells the store how long to display the product for sale. You should buy the product before the dates expires.
- A “**Best if Used By (or Before)**” date is recommended for best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.
- A “**Use-By**” date is the last date recommended for use of the product while at peak quality. The date has been determined by the manufacturer of the product.

Being Smart When Eating Out

Eating out can be lots of fun – so make it an enjoyable experience by following some simple guidelines to avoid foodborne illness. Remember to observe your food when it is served, and don’t ever hesitate to ask questions before you order. Waiters and waitresses can be quite helpful if you ask how a food is prepared. Also, let them know you don’t want any food item containing raw meat, poultry, seafood, sprouts, or eggs.

Basic Rules for Ordering

- Ask whether the food contains uncooked ingredients such as eggs, sprouts, meat, poultry, or seafood. If so, choose something else.
- Ask how these foods have been cooked. If the server does not know the answer, ask to speak to the chef to be sure your food has been cooked to a safe minimum internal temperature.
- If you plan to get a “doggy bag” or save leftovers to eat at a later time, refrigerate perishable foods as soon as possible – and always within 2 hours after purchase or delivery. If the leftover is in air temperatures above 90 °F, refrigerate within 1 hour.

If in doubt, make another selection!



Smart Menu Choices

Higher Risk:	Lower Risk:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Soft cheese made from unpasteurized (raw) milk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hard or processed cheeses. Soft cheeses only if they are made from pasteurized milk.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refrigerated smoked seafood and raw or undercooked seafood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fully cooked fish or seafood.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cold or improperly heated hot dogs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hot dogs reheated to steaming hot. If the hot dogs are served cold or lukewarm, ask to have them reheated until steaming, or choose something else.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sandwiches with cold deli or luncheon meat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grilled sandwiches in which the meat or poultry is heated until steaming.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Raw or undercooked fish, such as sashimi, non-vegetarian sushi or cerviche. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fully cooked fish that is firm and flaky.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Soft-boiled or “over-easy” eggs, as the yolks are not fully cooked. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fully cooked eggs with firm yolk and whites.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Salads, wraps, or sandwiches containing raw (uncooked) or lightly cooked sprouts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Salads, wraps, or sandwiches containing cooked sprouts.

Source: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodborneIllnessContaminants/PeopleAtRisk/ucm312705.html>



September is Healthy Aging® Month

Healthy Aging® Month is an annual observance month to focus national attention on the positive aspects of growing older.

The mission of Healthy Aging® Month is to encourage events that promote taking personal responsibility for one's health . . . be it physically, mentally or financially.

Ongoing research points out that it's never too late to adopt lifestyle choices that we can benefit from as we age.

Tips for Healthy Aging

- 1) **Live an active life**
Regular exercise is one of the greatest keys to physical and mental wellbeing. Living an active life will help you stay fit enough to maintain your independence. Regular exercise may prevent or even provide relief from many chronic conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, depression and arthritis.
- 2) **Eat healthy food**
Eat nutrient dense foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Avoid foods in sugars, fats and salt.
- 3) **Maintain your brain**
Never stop learning and challenging your mind! Take dance lessons, learn a new language, learn to play a musical instrument, or read a book.
- 4) **Maintain relationships**
Communicate with family and friends. Reach out to friends who may be isolated or feel lonely.
- 5) **Get enough sleep**
Older adults need seven to nine hours of sleep per night - but often get less. Lack of sleep can cause depression, irritability, increased risks for falls, and memory problems.
- 6) **How's your smile?**
Research shows people who smile more often are happier.
- 7) **Reduce stress**
Long-term stress can damage brain cells and lead to depression. Stress may also cause memory loss, fatigue, and decreased ability to fight off and recover from infection. It is estimated that more than 90% of illness is either caused or complicated by stress. Remember to always keep things in perspective - try to accept and adapt to things you cannot control.
- 8) **Take charge of your health**
Think about the way that your health can be improved by changing your lifestyle, and making those changes. You are your best advocate. The more you participate in your own healthcare the more satisfied you will be with the care you receive. Take time this month to set up annual physical and other health screenings.

Source: www.dartmouth-hitchcock.org/aging
