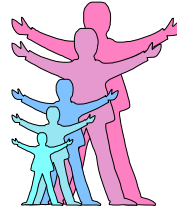


Helpline



September 2011
 Newsletter

National Food Safety Month®

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

During the month, it is very important to focus our attention on the causes of foodborne illness, and how to store, handle, and prepare food.

Food borne illness (also known as food poisoning) is any illness that results from eating contaminated food or water.

Causes:

Harmful bacteria are the most common causes of food poisoning, but other causes include viruses, parasites, toxins and contaminants.

Some of the organisms that cause the most illnesses, hospitalizations and deaths in the United States are:

- Salmonella
- Campylobacter
- E. coli 0157
- Listeria

Who's at Risk

Certain groups of people are more susceptible to foodborne illness. This means that they are more likely to get sick from contaminated food, if they do get sick, the effects are more serious. These groups include:

- Infants & children
- Older adults
- Persons with chronic diseases

Long-Term Effects

Did you know that one in six Americans will get sick from food poisoning this year alone? Most of them will recover without any lasting effects from their illness. For some, however, the effects can be devastating and even deadly.



The serious long-term effects associated with several common types of food poisoning include:

- Kidney failure
- Chronic arthritis
- Brain and nerve damage
- Death

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How to Prevent Foodborne Illness

Follow these simple four steps to food safety to keep your family safe from food poisoning:



- **Clean!** Everything that touches food should be clean. Cleanliness is a major factor in preventing foodborne illness.
- **Separate!** Fight cross-contamination! Cross-contamination is the transfer of harmful bacteria to food from other foods, cutting boards, and utensils.
- **Cook!** Use a thermometer in cooking. Using a food thermometer is the only way to tell if the food has reached a high enough temperature to destroy harmful bacteria.

Use a thermometer to measure the internal temperature of foods, such as meat, hamburgers, poultry, egg casseroles, and any combination dishes.

- **Chill!** Make sure the temperature in the refrigerator is 40° F or below and 0° F or below in the freezer. Use a refrigerator/freezer thermometer to check the temperature.

Dangerous Food Safety Mistakes

Sometime a simple mistake can have grave consequences. What may seem like a small food mistake can cause serious illness with long-term consequences. When it comes to some germs, such as salmonella, all it takes is 15 to 20 cells in undercooked food to cause food poisoning. And just a tiny taste of food with botulism, toxin can cause paralysis and even death.

Here are some common mistakes that have been proven to cause serious illness.

Mistake #1: Tasting food to see if it's still good.

Why: You can't taste (or smell or see) the bacteria that cause food poisoning. Tasting only a small amount can cause serious illness.

Solution: Throw out before harmful bacteria grows. Follow safe storage time charts.

Mistake #2: Putting cooked meat back on a plate that held raw meat.

Why: Germs from the raw meat can spread to the cooked meat

Solution: Always use separate plates for raw meat and cooked meat. The same rule applies to poultry and seafood.

Mistake #3: Thawing food on the counter.

Why: Harmful germs can multiply extremely rapidly at room temperature.

Solution: Thaw food safely:

- In the refrigerator
- In cold water
- In the microwave

Mistake #5: Letting food cool before putting in the fridge

Why: Illness-causing bacteria can grow in perishable foods within two hours unless you refrigerate them.

Solution: Refrigerate perishable foods within 2 hours or within 1 hour if the temperature is over 90° F.

Mistake #6: Eating raw cookie dough (or other foods with uncooked eggs)

Why: Uncooked eggs may contain Salmonella or other harmful bacteria.

Solution: Always cook eggs thoroughly. Avoid foods that contain raw or undercooked eggs.

Mistake #7: Marinating meat or seafood on the counter.

Why: Harmful germs in meat or seafood can multiply extremely rapidly at room temperature.

Solution: Always marinate meat or seafood in the refrigerator.

Mistake #8: Not washing your hands.

Why: Germs on your hands can contaminate the food that you and others eat.

Solution: Wash hands the right way - for 20 seconds with soap and running water.

Money Matters from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC)



Tips On Avoiding Employment Scams

(NAPS)—If you're looking for a job, you may see ads for firms that promise results. Unfortunately, some firms may misrepresent their services, promote outdated or fictitious job offerings, or charge high fees in advance for services that may not lead to a job.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the nation's consumer protection agency, says scammers advertise jobs exactly where legitimate employers do—on popular Web sites, in the classifieds and even on TV. The ads sound promising, whether it's for hourly work or an executive-level job. But ads placed by scammers come with a twist: You have to pay—and then, there's no job.

Many con artists are good at what they do. They can sound very convincing, especially when your defenses are down. They may say they have a job waiting for you...or they might guarantee to place you in a job. But you can't believe the promises—even when you want to. Legitimate companies won't guarantee you a job.

The FTC urges job seekers to be aware of the red flags that many signal a job scam:

- If an employer or employment-service firm wants you to pay—even if it says it's for certification, training materials or for its expenses placing you with a company—don't do business with it. Legitimate employers and firms don't ask you to pay for the promise of a job.
- Some listing services and “consultants” write their ads or phone scripts to sound like they have jobs waiting for you. The truth is, they're only selling information about looking for a job—information that's generally available for free.

To Do

Before you spend money responding to placement firms or completing placement contracts:

- ☑ Reject any company that promises to get you a job.
- ☑ Be skeptical of any employment-service firm that charges first, even if it guarantees refunds.
- ☑ Get a copy of the firm's contract and read it carefully before you pay any money. Understand the terms and conditions of the firm's refund policy. Make sure you understand what services the firm will provide and what you'll be responsible for doing. If oral promises are made, but don't appear in the contract, think twice about doing business with the firm.
- ☑ Take your time reading the contract. Don't be caught up in a rush to pay for services. Stay away from high-pressure sales pitches that require you to pay now or risk losing out on an opportunity.
- ☑ Be cautious about purchasing services or products from a firm that's reluctant to answer your questions.
- ☑ Be aware that some listing services and “consultants” write their ads to sound like there are jobs when they're selling general information about getting a job.
- ☑ Follow up with the offices of any company or organization mentioned in an ad or an interview by an employment service to find out if the company is really hiring.
- ☑ Be wary of firms promoting “previously undisclosed” federal government jobs. All federal positions are announced to the public on www.usajobs.gov.
- ☑ Check with your local consumer protection agency, state Attorney General's Office, and the Better Business Bureau to see if any complaints have been filed about a company with which you intend to do business. You also may contact these organizations if you have a problem with an employment-service firm.

If you've been the victim of a job scam and paid someone for a job that didn't exist, the FTC wants to hear about it. Complain to the FTC at www.ftc.gov/complaint or call 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357). Watch a new video, “How to File

a Complaint,” at www.ftc.gov/video to learn more. Letting the FCT know about your experience can help put an employment scam out of business. For more information and to watch an educational video, visit www.ftc.gov/jobscams.

The New Food Guidance



Bye Bye MyPyramid, hello MyPlate, the “new generation” food icon to prompt consumers to think differently about their food choices. ChooseMyPlate.gov contains a wealth of resources based on the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans to help individuals meet nutrient and calorie needs and make positive eating choices.

The Dietary Guidelines are increasingly important as federal departments search for ways to reduce rates of morbidity and mortality related to obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and other chronic illnesses. ChooseMyPlate.gov offers dietary assessment tools, nutrition education resources, and clear, actionable information about how to make better food choices. USDA will work with numerous partners—the media, educators, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), health professionals, industry, and others—to facilitate use of ChooseMyPlate.gov and promote to general audiences.

The MyPlate icon is intentionally simple. It was designed to remind consumers to eat healthfully and guide them to resources and tools to put the Dietary Guidelines into action. The icon is part of a broader communications initiative and, as such, is not intended to change consumer behavior alone.

*Remember that physical activity still plays a very important role in nutrition and wellness.

Choose MyPlate 10 tips to a great plate

Making food choices for a healthy lifestyle can be as simple as using these 10 Tips.



Use the ideas in this list to *balance your calories*, to choose foods to *eat more often*, and to cut back on foods to *eat less often*.

1 **balance calories**

Find out how many calories YOU need for a day as a first step in managing your weight. Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov to find your calorie level. Being physically active also helps you balance calories.

2 **enjoy your food, but eat less**

Take the time to fully enjoy your food as you eat it. Eating too fast or when your attention is elsewhere may lead to eating too many calories. Pay attention to hunger and fullness cues before, during, and after meals. Use them to recognize when to eat and when you’ve had enough.

3 **Use a smaller plate, bowl, and glass. Portion out foods before you eat. When eating out, choose a smaller size option, share a dish, or take home part of your meal.**

4 **foods to eat more often**

Eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free or 1% milk and dairy products. These foods have the nutrients you need for health—including potassium, calcium, vitamin D, and fiber. Make them the basis for meals and snacks.

5 **make half your plate fruits and vegetables**

Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables like tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli, along with other vegetables for your meals. Add fruit to meals as part of main or side dishes or as dessert

6 **switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk**

They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but fewer calories and less saturated fat.

7 **To eat more whole grains, substitute a whole-grain product for a refined product—such as eating whole-wheat bread instead of white bread or brown rice instead of white rice.**

8 foods to eat less often

Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt. They include cakes, cookies, ice cream, candies, sweetened drinks, pizza, and fatty meats like ribs, occasional treats, not everyday foods.

9 compare sodium in foods

Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose lower sodium versions of foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals. Select canned foods labeled “low sodium,” “reduced sodium,” or “no salt added.”

10 drink water instead of sugary drinks

Cut calories by drinking water or unsweetened beverages. Soda, energy drinks, and sports drinks are a major source of added sugar, and calories, in American diets.

**Dietary Guidelines Revised 2010
Selected Messages for Consumers
Coincides with the New Choose MyPlate**

Take action on the Dietary Guidelines by making changes in these three areas.

Choose steps that work for you and start today.

Balancing Calories

- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversized portions.



Foods to Increase

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.

Foods to Reduce

- Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals—and choose the foods with lower numbers.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.



Physical Activity

Why is physical activity important?

Regular physical activity can produce long term health benefits. People of all ages, shapes, sizes, and

abilities can benefit from being physically active. The more physical activity you do, the greater the health benefits. Check with your doctor before starting a physical activity program.

Being physically active can help you:

- Increase your chances of living longer
- Feel better about yourself
- Decrease your chances of becoming depressed
- Sleep well at night
- Move around more easily
- Have stronger muscles and bones
- Stay at or get to a healthy weight
- Be with friends or meet new people
- Enjoy yourself and have fun



When you are *not* physically active, you are more likely to:

- Get heart disease
- Get type 2 diabetes
- Have high blood pressure
- Have high blood cholesterol
- Have a stroke

Physical activity and nutrition work together for better health. Being active increases the amount of calories burned. As people age their metabolism slows, so maintaining energy balance requires moving more and eating less.

Some types of physical activity are especially beneficial:

- *Aerobic activities* make you breathe harder and make your heart beat faster. Aerobic activities can be moderate or vigorous in their intensity. Vigorous activities take more effort than moderate ones. For **moderate activities**, you can talk while you do them, but you can't sing. For **vigorous activities**, you can only say a few words without stopping to catch your breath.



- *Muscle-strengthening activities* make your muscles stronger. These include activities like push-ups and lifting weights. It is important to work all the different parts of the body — your legs, hips, back, chest, stomach, shoulders, and arms.
- *Bone-strengthening activities* make your bones stronger. Bone strengthening activities, like jumping, are especially important for children and adolescents. These activities produce a force on the bones that promotes bone growth and strength.
- *Balance and stretching activities* enhance physical stability and flexibility, which reduces risk of injuries. Examples are gentle stretching, dancing, yoga, martial arts, and t'ai chi.

Chilaquiles-Style Roasted Chicken Legs



Chilaquiles is a baked Mexican dish that's often made with leftover shredded chicken, tortilla strips, and cheese. In her more substantial and refined version, Grace Parisi bakes whole chicken legs with tomatoes, hominy, jalapenos, and tortilla chips.

Ingredients

2 clove(s)	garlic (smashed)
- - - -	Kosher salt
1 1/2 teaspoon(s)	ground cumin
1 1/2 teaspoon(s)	chile powder
2 tablespoon(s)	extra-virgin olive oil
1 can(s) (28 ounces)	diced tomatoes (drained well)
1 cup(s)	canned hominy (drained)
1/4 cup(s)	sliced pickled jalapenos (use bell pepper if spice not desired)
6 cup(s) (6 ounces)	lightly crushed thick corn tortilla chips
4 whole(s) (about 12 ounces)	chicken legs
- - - -	Chopped cilantro and sour cream (for serving)

Directions

- 1) Preheat the oven to 450° F. On a work surface, mash the garlic cloves to a paste with a pinch of salt. Transfer the garlic paste to a small bowl and stir in the ground cumin, chile powder, and 1 tablespoon of the olive oil.
- 2) In a 9-by 13-inch glass or ceramic baking dish, toss the drained diced tomatoes with the hominy, jalapenos, half of the spice paste, and the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Gently mix in the crushed tortilla chips.
- 3) On a work surface, cut halfway through the joint between the thigh and drumstick on the underside of each chicken leg. Score the top of each leg 3 or 4 times, cutting to the bone. Rub the remaining spice paste over and into the chicken and arrange skin side up in the baking dish. Roast in the center of the oven for about 30 minutes, until the chicken is cooked through.

Cooking Information

Serves: 4

Total Time: 45 minutes