Food Safety by Type of Food

Some foods are more frequently associated with food poisoning or foodborne illness than others. It is especially important to handle these foods properly. Use these tips and techniques to help keep food safe and prevent food poisoning.

Meat	Raw meat may contain parasites and bacteria such as E. coli and Salmonella. Thorough cooking destroys these harmful germs, but meat can become contaminated again if it is not handled and stored properly. For information about meat preparation, see these fact sheets.
Poultry	Raw poultry may contain harmful bacteria such as Salmonella and Campylobacter. Never wash raw poultry. Cook chicken to the proper temperature to kill germs. For information about poultry preparation, see these fact sheets. For information about handling turkey safely, see these fact sheets.
Seafood	A well-balanced diet that includes a variety of fish and shellfish can contribute to heart health and children's growth and development. But raw seafood can contain toxins such as mercury or bacteria that can be destroyed only by cooking to the proper temperature. Learn more about selecting, preparing, and serving seafood safely.
Eggs and egg products	Eggs are one of nature's most nutritious and economical foods, but fresh eggs must be handled carefully. Even eggs with clean, uncracked shells may occasionally contain Salmonella. To prevent food poisoning, keep eggs refrigerated, cook eggs until yolks are firm, and cook foods containing eggs thoroughly.
Milk, cheese, and dairy products	You can get very sick from unpasteurized (raw) milk and dairy products made with raw milk, including any type of cheese as well as ice cream and yogurt. That’s why it’s important to make sure that milk has been pasteurized, which kills harmful bacteria. Learn why raw milk is risky.
Fresh fruits, vegetables, and juices	Fresh produce can pick up harmful bacteria from

	many sources, from contaminated soil and water to a contaminated cutting board. Fruit and vegetable juices must be treated to kill bacteria. Learn more about selecting and serving produce safely.
Nuts, grains, and beans	Nuts, grains, beans, and other legumes and their by-products are found in a wide variety of foods. Since these foods are ingredients in so many food products, contamination or mislabeling of allergens can pose a widespread risk. Learn more from the FDA about food allergens and what to do if symptoms occur. Also, people suffering from celiac disease—for whom consuming the gluten naturally found in some grains can lead to such serious conditions as anemia, osteoporosis, diabetes, thyroid disease, and intestinal cancers—should see FDA's Gluten and Food Labeling.
Raw flour	Flour is typically a raw agricultural product that hasn't been treated to kill germs. Bacteria are killed when food made with flour is cooked. That's why you should never taste raw dough or batter.
Baby food and infant formula	Infants and young children are more likely to get a foodborne illness because their immune systems are not developed enough to fight off infections. Take extra care when handling and preparing their food and formula.
Pet food	Pet food can contain harmful bacteria or chemical toxins. If pet food is not handled properly, both pets and people could get sick. Keep infants and young children away from areas where you feed your pets, and never allow them to touch or eat pet food. Learn more about safely handling pet food and treats.

Additional Information

Foods Linked to Food Poisoning (CDC)

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