



FOOD SAFETY INFORMATION COUNCIL

**FOOD SAFETY – IT'S IN YOUR
HANDS**

**A CONSUMER GUIDE TO
REDUCING YOUR RISK OF
FOOD POISONING**

Lydia Buchtman

About the Food Safety Information Council

- Food Safety Information Council is a not for profit group
- Undertakes food safety education for consumers
- National Food Safety Week 2nd week of November
- Funding: Members, Sponsors, Supporters
 - Australian Department of Health and Ageing
 - Food Standards Australia New Zealand
 - state and territory health and food safety agencies
 - local government
 - leading community, industry and professional organisations



Food poisoning in Australia

- 5.4 million cases of food poisoning each year
- Estimated third of cases occur from food handling mistakes in the home
- Each year 120 people die of food poisoning
- Food poisoning also linked to long-term, chronic illnesses such as reactive arthritis, Haemolytic Uraemic Syndrome and Gullain-Barré syndrome.

Temperature danger zone

- Food poisoning is caused by bacteria or viruses in our food.
- These bugs grow rapidly in food with a temperature between 5°C and 60°C and can reach dangerous levels within 2 hours
- Cooking kills these bugs
- Refrigeration at 5°C or below stops them growing

Food Safety Messages

- Clean
- Cook
- Chill
- Separate

Clean Hands

- Hand washing reduces your risk of food poisoning (and colds and flu)
- Remember the 20/20 rule:
 - Wash hands for 20 seconds with warm soapy water
 - Dry hands for 20 seconds before starting to cook
 - Repeat after handling raw meat, poultry or vegetables with visible soil

Clean equipment

- Keep your kitchen clean
- Use thoroughly cleaned chopping boards, utensils and crockery for food that won't be cooked again e.g. salads, desserts
- Wash and dry chopping boards, utensils and work surfaces after preparing raw meats and poultry

Cook

- Cook chicken, minced or boned meats, hamburgers, stuffed meats and sausages right through until juices run clear
- Defrost frozen poultry and meats thoroughly before cooking
- Follow cooking instructions on package
- Reheat food to steaming hot

Cooking if you are sick

- If you have gastro don't prepare food or drink for other people
- Ask someone else to cook or get takeaway
- If you have to cook, prepare something that is cooked steaming hot
- Wash your hands frequently

Chill - Fridge

- Keep your fridge at 5°C or below
- Keep perishable food in the fridge
- Refrigerate hot food as soon as it stops steaming (and divide into smaller containers so they cool quickly)
- Defrost food in the fridge or microwave not on the kitchen bench

Chill - leftovers

- Refrigerate leftovers promptly
- Don't keep leftovers if they've been unrefrigerated for more than 4 hours
- Use within 2-3 days
- Reheat to steaming hot all the way through
- If in doubt throw it out

Separate

- Keep raw meat and poultry from touching other food
- Keep raw meat and poultry in a sealed container at the bottom of the fridge so it can't drip on to other food
- Cover all refrigerated food

Vulnerable people

- Some people are more likely to get ill or have a serious outcome from food poisoning as they have weakened immune systems:
- Older people over 65
- Women during pregnancy
- Some people who are taking immuno-suppressing medication

Vulnerable people

- Pay particular attention to hygiene
- Avoid foods of high risk from listeria see <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/newsroom/factsheets/factsheets2005/listeriacommonlyasked3115.cfm>
- Read the fact sheet on aged care facilities http://www.foodsafety.asn.au/_srcfiles/elderlyquarkv4.pdf

Food safety and the environment

- Use running water to wash your hands and fruit and vegetables as it carries the bugs away
- Don't water fruit, herbs and vegetables with grey water if you are going to eat them without cooking
- Don't use grey water in your garden if anyone in your family is ill
- Keep your fridge at 5°C or below

Food safety and entertaining

- Cooking for a larger number of people increases the risk of food poisoning
- Make room in your fridge
 - remove sauces and pickles
 - keep the drinks on ice
- Take food out of the fridge just before you need it
- Serve hot food steaming hot
- Replace dips and other perishable food every couple of hours

BBQs and picnics

- Take food out of the fridge just before you leave
- Stack meat and poultry at the bottom of cooler where they can't drip on other foods
- Use sealed containers
- Freeze drinks or use frozen bricks in cooler
- Don't use the same plate for raw and cooked meats
- Cook hamburgers, sausages and poultry until juices run clear
- Don't bring leftovers home if out more than 4 hours

Christmas

- Ensure turkey is defrosted all the way through
 - Ask butcher to defrost a turkey in their cooler room
- Cook the turkey properly – test in thickest part with skewer so juices run clear
- Follow instructions on the ham wrapping, remove plastic and store in clean cloth bag soaked in vinegar
- Don't forget to refrigerate leftovers promptly

Shopping

- Buy chilled and frozen food last
- Place chilled and frozen foods in an insulated cooler for the trip home
- If possible, carry your food home in the air-conditioned part of your car, not in the boot
- Go directly home - don't leave your shopping in a hot car
- When home, immediately pack chilled and frozen products into your refrigerator or freezer

What should I do if I get sick?

- If you are feeling unwell visit your doctor
 - some types of food poisoning are life threatening
 - early diagnosis can help avoid severe consequences
- Food poisoning is particularly serious in young children, the elderly and people of all ages in poor health
 - Early medical attention is recommended
- Contact your local health department and report the illness
- It probably wasn't the last meal you ate, but if you have any food samples keep them for analysis
- Remember, food that makes you sick can still look fresh and tasty

Resources Available

- **Brochures**
 - How you cook can make you (and others) crook
 - Do you cook and take food to relatives and friends in aged care facilities?
- **Poster**
 - How you cook can make you (and others) crook
- **Videos**
 - Fridge packing
 - Cross-contamination
 - Hand washing
 - Barbeques
 - Cooler packing

Sponsorship and membership

- **Become a Food Safety Information Council**
 - 'like-minded' bodies (and individuals) working together to provide a community service in food safety information
- **Demonstrate your excellent corporate citizenship**
 - sponsor Council activities
- **<http://www.foodsafety.asn.au/membersponsors/>**



Conclusion



FOOD SAFETY INFORMATION COUNCIL

Email foodsafety@ozemail.com.au

Phone: 0407 626 688

www.foodsafety.asn.au