

FOOD SAFETY

Food Safety Procedures and Information

There are a lot of ways food can become contaminated with bacteria causing people to get sick. Whether you are having a backyard barbecue, serving your family a normal meal, preparing food for a small or large group of people, or you are considered to be a food service establishment, there are procedures you should put in place to ensure that the food you serve will not contain foodborne bacteria.

Food can become contaminated by improper cooking/cooling/reheating temperatures, cross-contamination from utensils or cooking surfaces, handling of food with your hands or other items that aren't clean, preparing food when you are sick, kitchen area not being clean and free of insects, rodents, and dust, cooking in contaminated water, and not thoroughly washing fruits and vegetables before use.

Bacteria growth on foods can also increase based on outside temperatures like during the summer, when it's hot. So it's more important than ever to be sure foods are handled properly during the summer season.

The Clinton County Health Department has a wealth of knowledge to assist and inform you, of the proper procedures to protect your loved ones, friends, associates or customers from foodborne illness when preparing food for them. All this information is free to the public.

What are the Correct Food Temperatures?

Most foodborne illness is caused by bacteria that multiply rapidly at temperatures between 60 degrees and 125 degrees Fahrenheit. To control any bacteria that may be present, it is important to maintain the internal temperature of cooked foods that will be served hot at 140 degrees Fahrenheit or above, and to maintain the internal temperature of foods that will be served cold at 45 degrees Fahrenheit or below.

What is Cross-Contamination?

Cross contamination is when you are cutting raw foods and cooked or ready-to-serve foods on the same cutting board without sanitizing between changed use; use of slicers, graters, choppers and grinders for more than one food product without cleaning between use; same for cook's knives.

What is Improper Food Storage?

Improper food storage includes uncovered foods on refrigerator shelves; raw foods stored directly on shelves or against refrigerator walls; raw foods stored in direct contact with prepared food.

What is Improper Food Handling?

Improper food handling is unnecessary use of hands during preparation and serving; thawing of frozen food at room temperature in warm water.

Wash Your Hands

Remember to use good personal hygiene, such as washing your hands:

- > before touching anything in the cooking area
- > after you've just handled with raw meat
- > after you have used the restroom
- > after you've just used a tissue or handkerchief
- > after you touched any soiled object, surface or clothing
- > after you've touched or scratched any area of the body
- > before you work with ready-to-eat foods

Contact Us

To receive more information or assistance on food safety, call or visit us at:

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