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## Food Safety and COVID-19

Food safety is the safe handling and preparation of food. Maintaining healthy food safety practices is important because young children are one of the highest risk groups for foodborne illness. With the COVID-19 pandemic some are concerned about food and food packaging as a route of transmission. According to the **Centers for Disease Control (CDC)** there is currently no evidence of transmission of COVID-19 through food, food packaging or grocery bags (6/25/2020). The risk of becoming sick with COVID-19 from handling food or food packaging is thought to be very low. However, safe food handling practices should always be taken.

### Food Safety Principles

#### Principle 1: Clean

*Wash hands, surfaces, and utensils frequently*

- ✔ Wash hands with warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
- ✔ Disinfect "high-touch" surfaces like door knobs, table surfaces, and kitchen countertops frequently.
- ✔ Thoroughly clean all surfaces and utensils that have touched raw meat, poultry, seafood or eggs with soapy water.

#### Principle 3: Cook

*Cook foods to the appropriate temperature*

#### Minimum Internal Temperatures for Common Meats

##### 145°F

- ✔ *Whole cuts of pork, beef, veal, and lamb (plus a 3 minute rest).*
- ✔ *Fish (or until the flesh is opaque and flakes easily with a fork.)*

##### 160°F

- ✔ *Ground beef, pork, veal, lamb, and eggs (or until the yolk and egg white are firm)*

##### 165°F

- ✔ *Ground poultry and whole cut poultry*
- ✔ Keep hot foods above 140°F after cooking.
- ✔ Reheat leftovers to 165°F.

#### Principle 2: Separate

*Don't cross contaminate food and cooking surfaces*

- ✔ Use separate utensils and cutting boards for produce, ready-to-eat foods, raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs.
- ✔ Use separate plates and bowls for raw and cooked foods.
- ✔ Store raw meat, poultry, and seafood in a leak-proof container on the lowest level of your refrigerator.

#### What is the danger zone?

The danger zone is the temperature range between 40°F and 140°F where bacteria that cause foodborne illness grow quickly.

#### Principle 4: Chill

*Refrigerate and freeze food properly*

- ✔ Avoid the temperature danger zone. Refrigerate leftovers and perishable foods within 2 hours.
- ✔ Keep the refrigerator at 40°F or below and the freezer at 0°F or below. Use a refrigerator thermometer for the most accurate reading.

## HANDWASHING

Washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is an effective way to lessen the risk of spreading disease. Hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol may be used if soap and water are not available. Practice washing hands with children to promote healthy hand hygiene.

### Handwashing should occur:

- ✓ **Before** meals and snacks
- ✓ **Before, during, and after** preparing food
- ✓ **After** handling raw meat, poultry, seafood, or eggs
- ✓ **Before and after** tending to a wound
- ✓ **Before and after** caring for a sick person
- ✓ **After** using the toilet
- ✓ **After** touching or tending to a pet
- ✓ **After** coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
- ✓ **After** touching garbage
- ✓ **After** changing a diaper or helping a child use the toilet

### Handwashing 1-2-3



#### STEP 1

- ✓ Wet hands with warm water and lather with soap.
- ✓ Scrub all surfaces of the hands including palms, back of hands, between the fingers, under fingernails, and wrists for at least 20 seconds.

#### STEP 2

- ✓ Rinse hands under warm, running water.



#### STEP 3

- ✓ Dry hands using disposable paper towel or cloth.
- ✓ Consider having separate drying cloths for each child labeled with their name.



### Handwashing Songs

There are plenty of tunes to teach our youngest learners proper hand washing technique. Providers from all over are teaching hand hygiene using songs like "Happy Birthday", the "ABC's" and even "Baby Shark". Here are some other songs our providers are using:

#### To the tune of Row Your Boat:

Wash, wash, wash your hands  
Get them nice and clean  
Scrub them here  
Scrub them there  
Scrub them in between

(Repeat once)

#### To the tune of Splish Splash:

Splish, splash I was washin' my hands,  
There was a splishin and a splashin  
Reelin with the feelin,  
Movin' and groovin  
Yeah, yeah

Sources: [www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/newsletter/food-safety-and-Coronavirus.html](http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/newsletter/food-safety-and-Coronavirus.html), [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/food-and-COVID-19.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/food-and-COVID-19.html), [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html), [www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/](http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/), [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov), [www.fns.usda.gov/tn/handwashing-and-cleaning-resources](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/handwashing-and-cleaning-resources)

## Safe Grocery Shopping

- ✓ Reduce the amount of trips and time spent in the grocery store as much as possible.
- ✓ Utilize non-contact grocery pickup or delivery if feasible.
- ✓ Cover your mouth and nose with a mask. Avoid close physical contact while at the store maintaining at least 6 feet apart from others outside of your household.
- ✓ Wash your hands with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds after returning from the grocery store and putting groceries away.



## Handling Food and Food Packaging

- ✓ It is **not** recommended to use disinfectants made for hard surfaces like bleach and ammonia on food packaging.
- ✓ Produce should be washed under cool running water. Soap, bleach, alcohol, or any other disinfectant chemical should **not** be used to wash produce.
- ✓ Use a produce brush to scrub the exterior of fruits and vegetables with hard skin such as melons, sweet potatoes, and potatoes **even if you do not plan to eat the skin.**
- ✓ The use of vinegar, salt, lemon juice, or lime juice to wash produce has **not** been shown to be effective in removing germs from produce.

*Updated: 10/2020*

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