

FOOD SAFETY: DIRECTIONS FOR THE CONSUMERS

Facts: why to handle food safely

- How do germs get into food?
- Simple rules to keep infant's food safe



CONSUMERS UPDATES SAFFI facts and briefing sheet n.2 (June 2022)



FACTS:

If food isn't handled, prepared or stored properly, it can become spoiled with germs and contaminants of various kind, yet still taste and smell okay. Contaminants can cause stomach-aches, diarrhea, vomiting, or fever. Some contaminants can cause more serious problems such as kidney failure, blood infection, or even paralysis. Babies and young children, older adults, and people with weak immune systems are most at risk of problems if they eat food that is spoiled.

HOW DO GERMS GET INTO FOOD?

Here's how:

- Food from animal sources (such as meat, chicken) can contain germs coming from these animals.
- Vegetables and fruits can pick up germs from the soil or during harvesting.
- Germs and contaminants of various kind can get onto food while it is handled, processed, stored, and/or transported.

The SAFFI Project supported by the EU Horizon 2020 Grant addresses this important area of food safety by developing an integrated approach to enhance the identification, assessment, detection and mitigation of safety risks raised by microbiological and chemical hazards all along the EU and Chinese infant food chains.



SIMPLE RULES TO KEEP INFANT'S FOOD SAFE

Choose safe foods for your child.

- Avoid unpasteurized milk and cheese products and fruit or vegetable juices, unless they were prepared from washed, fresh fruit or vegetables just before serving.
- Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables well under running tap water, especially if they are to be served uncooked. Lettuce, spinach and other salad greens need careful attention.



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- Children should avoid eating raw or undercooked alfalfa, mung bean or other sprouts, because the seeds used for sprouting may have germs.
- Children younger than 1 year of age should not eat honey. It may contain a germ that causes infant botulism, a type of paralysis in infants, but not in older children and adults.

Separate raw foods from cooked foods.

- Store meat, poultry, fish or seafood in leak-proof containers in the fridge, so that juices don't spill onto other foods.
- Keep raw meats, poultry, fish and seafood away from cooked food, fresh fruits and vegetables. Wash hands, utensils, chopping boards and work surfaces carefully after handling raw meats, and before using the same items to prepare raw vegetables, salads, sandwiches or other food.
- When barbecuing, do not place cooked meats back on the plate that held raw meats.
Wash your hands.
- Wash your hands carefully with soap and water before you prepare or handle food. Also wash hands after handling raw meat, poultry or seafood.
- If you have to stop for any reason while you are preparing food – especially to use the toilet, change a diaper or touch a pet—wash your hands before returning to the food.

Cook all meats – including hot dogs and sausages – poultry, seafood and eggs thoroughly.

- Raw meat is often contaminated with harmful germs. Cooking meat until it is steaming hot will destroy any dangerous germs.
- It is very important to cook ground beef and other meat patties all the way through. The meat should be brown at the center, not pink or red. The juices should be clear or brown. Undercooked ground meat can cause “hamburger disease,” a serious infection that can cause damage to the intestines and the kidneys.
- Pay special attention when barbecuing, as meat may appear well done from the outside but remain undercooked inside.
- Chicken should be well cooked, not pink or red and not raw near the bones. Undercooked chicken and eggs can cause a serious form of diarrhea.
- Undercooked pork can result in bacterial or parasitic diseases.

Eat foods soon after they are cooked.

- Keep hot foods hot, at 60°C (140°F) or above.
- Keep cold foods cold, at 4°C (40°F) or below.
- Don't let foods cool to room temperature. If serving later, refrigerate right away.

Store cooked foods appropriately.

- Keep foods cooked in advance stored at more than 60°C (140°F) or rapidly cooled and stored at less than 4°C (40°F) to avoid growth of any germs that may have remained.
- Store leftovers right away in the fridge or freezer.
- Eat cream-filled pastries and potato, egg or other salads with creamy dressings immediately after they are made or come out of the fridge. Store leftovers quickly in the fridge.
- Make sure your fridge is set at a temperature of 4°C (40°F) or less.

Reheat cooked foods adequately.

- When serving heated leftovers, reheat the food all the way through.

Keep your kitchen clean.

- Clean all dishes, utensils, cutting boards, and counters that are in contact with food before and after each use. Use hot water.

Protect your food.

- Insects, rodents and other animals, including pets, can carry germs. Store foods that don't need to be refrigerated in closed containers in a safe place.

Use safe water.

- Always use safe water when preparing food. If in doubt about water quality, boil it.

SAFFI: THE SINO-EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM PARTNER CENTERS



- Coordination: French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE),
- Five international infant food companies (Friesland Campina, HiPP, YIOTIS, Beingmate, YFFC)
 - Two food safety authority institutions (ZAIQ and ANSES)
 - Three European technological SMEs (CremeGlobal, Computomics, BDS)
 - The Union of 49 National European Societies of Pediatric (EPA-UNEPSA)
 - Seven leading European and Chinese academic institutions (WU, UNITO, IRTA, IVV; ZJU, ZAAS, JAAS)



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