



Orientation

Food Safety

Principles of Safe Food Handling

It is important to maintain a high standard of personal hygiene and cleanliness while cooking to prevent cross-contamination and food borne illness. Even a healthy body can carry bacteria, which can easily spread when proper food-handling practices are not followed.

To minimize food safety risk:

- Keep long hair tied back – nobody likes to get a stray hair in their food. The scalp can also encourage the growth of harmful bacteria.
- Remove dangling jewelry, watches and rings - jewelry can get caught on hot items and can be a safety risk. It also provides a home for bacteria and dirt to accumulate.
- Wear an apron (recommended) - wearing an apron not only keeps your clothing clean, it prevents food contamination from outside sources.
- Refrain from cooking if not feeling well – this will help to avoid the possible spread of illness. It takes just a cough, sneeze, or rubbing of the eye, nose, or mouth to spread the illness to the food. Encourage unwell participants to observe and taste the recipes if they still want to take part in the session.
- Use proper technique and care with cuts and wounds – clean then cover any cuts and wounds with a Band-Aid and then wear a disposable glove on top. The participant should wash hands prior to putting the glove on and be changed frequently.

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Cross Contamination

- Clean and sanitize countertops and work surfaces before preparing any food.
- Use hot soapy water to clean countertops and sanitize surfaces with approved food grade sanitizer according to product directions.
- Maintain temperatures at proper temperatures at all times (out of the danger zone – see below) hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Keep this in mind when shopping and transporting foods.
 - The Danger Zone is the temperature range at which bacteria grow most rapidly - between 4°C and 60°C.
 - Keep refrigerated, frozen and cooked food out of the Danger Zone. If these foods are held within the “danger zone” bacteria can grow very quickly and cause the food to spoil.
 - Rotate or stir food when cooking, especially if using the microwave to avoid “cold spots” and allow foods to heat evenly.
 - Use separate cutting boards for different types food e.g., separate cutting board for meat and produce

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Cleaning Produce

Produce may become contaminated in a variety of ways from soil, irrigation water, equipment, etc. It is important to properly wash vegetables and fruit!

Be sure to:

- Check the produce when buying to ensure it is not bruised or damaged.
- Wash your hands before handling the produce.
- Remove any damaged or bruised area on the produce.
- Wash all vegetables and fruit with cool running water.
- Produce with a firm skin (e.g., melons) should be washed under cool running water and scrubbed with a clean brush or rub with the hand.
- Refrigerate all cut, peeled or cooked produce within two hours of preparing.
- Always store produce away from any meat products or raw foods in the refrigerator

Review this video which illustrates how to wash vegetables and fruit:

<http://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Videos/Kitchen-Tips-and-Food-Handling/Video-Everyday-tips-for-washing-vegetables-and-fr.aspx>

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