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10 Easy Ways To Protect Your Family From Food Poisoning

By Terry Nicholls

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by: **Terry Nicholls**

Do you realize the many ways that bacteria can contaminate the food YOUR FAMILY eats? Do you know how to tell if your food is THOROUGHLY cooked to keep YOUR family safe from Food Poisoning? Do you know what to do if you or SOMEONE YOU LOVE gets Food Poisoning?

When it comes to food preparation and storage, "Common Practices" could be POISONING your family!

Here's how to avoid the problem entirely:

1. Plan For Safety

Make sure you have the right equipment, including cutting boards, utensils, food thermometers, cookware, shallow containers for storage, soap, and paper towels. Make sure you have a source of clean water. Plan ahead to ensure that there will be adequate storage space in the refrigerator and freezer.

2. Shop Smart

Prevention of food poisoning starts with your trip to the supermarket. Pick up your packaged and canned foods first. Buy cans and jars that look perfect. Do the cans have dents? Don't buy canned goods that are dented, cracked, or bulging. These are the warning signs that dangerous bacteria may be growing in the can. Are the jars cracked? Do they have lids that are loose or bulging? The food may have germs that can make you sick. Look for any expiration dates on the labels and never buy outdated food. Likewise, check the "use by" or "sell by" date on dairy products such as cottage cheese, cream cheese, yogurt, and sour cream and pick the ones that will stay fresh longest in your refrigerator.

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3. Store Food Properly

After shopping, get home as soon as you can. Then put food into the refrigerator or freezer right away. Make sure to set the refrigerator temperature to 40° F and the freezer to 0° F. Check temperatures with an appliance thermometer. Be sure to refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared foods, and leftovers within 2 hours of shopping or preparing. Place raw meat, poultry, and seafood in containers in the refrigerator, to prevent their juices from dripping on other foods. Raw juices may contain harmful bacteria. Eggs always go in the refrigerator.

4. Prepare Food Safely

Wash hands and surfaces often. Bacteria can be spread throughout the kitchen and get onto cutting boards, utensils and counter tops. To prevent this, wash hands with soap and hot water before and after handling food, and after using the bathroom, changing diapers, or handling pets. Wash everything

else before and after it touches food. Use paper towels or clean cloths to wipe kitchen surfaces or spills. Wash cloths before you use them again for anything else. Use the hot cycle of your washing machine. Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops with hot, soapy water after preparing each food item and before you go on to the next item. A solution of 1 teaspoon of bleach in 1 quart of water may be used to sanitize washed surfaces and utensils.

5. Cook Food Thoroughly

Cook food thoroughly until it is done. Cooked red meat looks brown inside. Poke cooked chicken with a fork. The juices should look clear, not pink. Dig a fork into cooked fish. The fish should flake. Cooked egg whites and yolks are firm, not runny. Use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of meat, poultry, casseroles and other food. Use a thermometer with a small-diameter stem. Insert the thermometer 1 to 2 inches into the center of the food and wait 30 seconds to ensure an accurate measurement. Check temperature in several places to be sure the food is evenly heated.

6. Chill Food Promptly

Place food in the refrigerator. Don't overfill the refrigerator. Cool air must circulate to keep food safe. Divide food and place in shallow containers. Slice roast beef or ham and layer in containers in portions for service. Divide turkey into smaller portions or slices & refrigerate. Remove stuffing from cavity before refrigeration. Place soups or stews in shallow containers. To cool quickly, place in ice water bath and stir. Cover and label cooked foods. Include the preparation date on the label.

7. Transport Food Safely

Keep cold food cold. Place cold food in cooler with a cold source such as ice or commercial freezing gels. Use plenty of ice or commercial freezing gels. Cold food should be held at or below 40° F. Hot food should be kept hot, at or above 140° F. Wrap well and place in an insulated container.

8. Reheat Food Correctly

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Heat cooked, commercially vacuum-sealed, ready-to-eat foods, such as hams and roasts, to 140° F. Foods that have been cooked ahead & cooled should be reheated to at least 165° F. Reheat leftovers thoroughly to at least 165° F. Reheat sauces, soups, and gravies to a boil.

9. Serve Food The Safe Way

Use clean containers and utensils to store and serve food. When a dish is empty or nearly empty, replace with fresh container of food, removing the previous container. Place cold food in containers on some ice. Hold cold foods at or below 40° F. Food that will be portioned and served should be placed in a shallow container. Place the container inside a deep pan filled partially with ice to keep food cold. Once food is thoroughly heated on stovetop, oven or in microwave oven, keep food hot by using a heat source. Place food in chafing dishes, preheated steam tables, warming trays and/or slow cookers. Check the temperature frequently to be sure food stays at or above 140° F.

10. Complete Your Meal Experience Safely

Cooked foods should not be left standing on the table or kitchen counter for more than 2 hours. Disease-causing bacteria grow in temperatures between 40° F and 140° F. Cooked foods that have

been in this temperature range for more than 2 hours should not be eaten. If a dish is to be served hot, get it from the stove to the table as quickly as possible. Reheated foods should be brought to a temperature of at least 165° F. Keep cold foods in the refrigerator or on a bed of ice until serving. This rule is particularly important to remember in the summer months. Leftovers should be refrigerated as soon as possible. Meats should be cut in slices of 3 inches or less and all foods should be stored in small, shallow containers to hasten cooling. Be sure to remove all the stuffing from roast turkey or chicken and store it separately. Giblets should also be stored separately. Leftovers should be used within 3 days. Discard any food left out at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

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Terry Nicholls is the author of the eBook "Food Safety: Protecting Your Family From Food Poisoning". For more tips like this and to learn more about his book visit his site at

Protect Yourself and Your Loved Ones From Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

By edbishop

Carbon monoxide poisoning is responsible for at least 400 accidental deaths and over 5,000 people are treated in hospital emergency rooms per year.

Unfortunately, carbon monoxide poisoning is often misdiagnosed as flu, food poisoning, allergy/asthma or chronic fatigue syndrome.

Children, the elderly, individuals with respiratory problems and pets are at risk, even at low levels.

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Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are; headaches, nausea, drowsiness, vomiting, tiredness, pain, cramps and sleep disturbance.

Some people experience headaches and dizziness for almost 2 years prior to carbon monoxide poisoning diagnosis.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that is highly toxic, making it impossible to detect with our senses.

Carbon monoxide is produced by incomplete combustion in household appliances like furnaces, boilers, water heaters, stoves, ovens, fireplaces as well as well as automobiles.

Tips to protect yourself and your loved ones:

1) Install carbon monoxide detectors in your home

2) Have your appliances (boilers, furnaces, stoves, water heater, fireplaces) checked and serviced by a reputable heating company.

Be sure they are equipped with a professional carbon monoxide analyzer.

If they tell you they don't have one, find another company!

3 Do not use unvented appliances (kerosene heaters, barbecue grilles) in the house.

4) If you have a garage that is attached to your home click [here](#).

5) Any time you strengthen the insulation properties or add a ventilation fan you should have your appliances checked to ensure the upgrades have not compromised the ability of the appliances to safely draft the combustion products from the house.

By following the above guidelines, the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning can be significantly reduced.

Go to

Ed Bishop is founder and president of Enhanced Living Inc., a Troy, NY–based design–consulting and contracting company specializing in high performance heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems . A pioneer in residential contracting, Ed is a thirty–year industry veteran trained in the "House Is A System" approach to HVAC design. He was formerly a building analyst instructor, providing certification training for New York's Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® program.

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