

Special Foods/Special Advice



Some foods may contain bacteria that can be especially harmful to seniors and cause serious illness. This program will highlight foods seniors are advised not to eat. It also explains important safe food handling tips for some ready-to-eat foods.

Reheating ready-to-eat foods:

It's important to reheat some foods that you buy pre-cooked. That's because these foods can become re-contaminated with bacteria after they have been processed and packaged at the plant. These foods include: hot dogs, luncheon meats, cold cuts, fermented and dry sausage, and other deli-style meat and poultry products. Reheat these foods until they are steaming hot. If you cannot reheat these foods, do not eat them. Wash your hands with hot, soapy water after handling these types of ready-to-eat foods. (Wash for at least 20 seconds.) Also wash cutting boards, dishes and utensils. Thorough washing helps eliminate any bacteria that might get on your hands or other surfaces from the food before it's been reheated.

Foods Seniors are Advised Not to Eat

To reduce risks of illness from bacteria in food, seniors (and others who face special risks of illness) are advised not to eat:

- Raw fin fish and shellfish, including oysters, clams, mussels, and scallops.
- Raw or unpasteurized milk or cheese.
- Soft cheeses such as feta, Brie, Camembert, blue-veined, and Mexican-style

cheese. (Hard cheeses, processed cheeses, cream cheese, cottage cheese, or yogurt need not be avoided.)

- Raw or lightly cooked egg or egg products including salad dressings, cookie or cake batter, sauces, and beverages such as egg nog. (Foods made from commercially pasteurized eggs are safe to eat.)
- Raw meat or poultry.
- Raw sprouts (alfalfa, clover and radish)
- Unpasteurized or untreated fruit or vegetable juice (These juices will carry a warning label.)
- New information on food safety is constantly emerging. Recommendations and precautions are updated as scientists learn more about preventing foodborne illness. You need to be aware of and follow the most current information on food safety.



More Information

If you have questions and you'd like to talk to an expert, please call the following toll-free hotlines. You can reach the Food and Drug Administration by calling: 1-888-SAFEFOOD.

The USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline is 1-800-535-4555. Or use your computer to get food safety information at

www.FoodSafety.gov

Text – **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**
Brochure “To Your Health! Food Safety for Seniors”
www.fda.gov

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