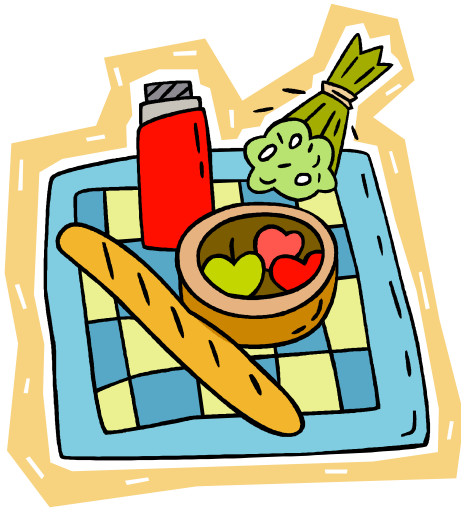




Summer Food Safety

Studies show that older adults do a better job of handling food safety than any other group. Even so, when it comes to your health and safety, you can never be too careful. Warm summer days make it even more important to be careful about food safety.



Even though we have one of the safest food supplies in the world we still have many cases of food borne illness each year. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 76 million Americans get sick, more than 300,000 are hospitalized and 5,000 die each year from illnesses caused by contaminated foods or beverages.

Older adults are at greater risk of getting sick from harmful bacteria in food. Our immune systems weaken as we age, making it easier to get sick in our later years. Also, illnesses associated with advanced age, such as diabetes, cancer, and kidney disease, increase our risk for foodborne illness.

Food Safety Rules

Foodborne illnesses can be prevented by following some basic rules. The four basic rules of food safety are **Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill**. In this newsletter we are going to talk about the first two rules. We will discuss the last two rules in the next newsletter.

Clean

Harmful bacteria can spread throughout the kitchen on cutting boards, countertops, utensils and sponges.

Wash Up

- Wash your hands, utensils and all surfaces with hot, soapy water before and after preparing food.
- Remember to wash your hands after using the bathroom or playing with your pets.

Cutting boards

- Wash cutting boards with hot, soapy water after each use.
- Discard boards that have lots of cuts or scratches on the surface.

Keep towels clean

- Use paper towels or cloth towels to clean kitchen surfaces. Be sure to wash cloth towels often in the hot cycle of your washing machine.

Handle Fruits and Vegetables Safely

- Wash all fruits and vegetables well, before peeling or slicing, under running water. Don't use soap or other detergents.
- Cut away any damaged or bruised areas, bacteria can grow in these places.
- Store cut, peeled and broken apart fruits and vegetables, such as melon balls, cleaned cut carrots and broccoli at or below 40°F in the refrigerator.

Separate

- Wash hands, cutting boards, dishes, and utensils with hot soapy water after they touch any raw meat, poultry, or seafood.
- If possible use one cutting board for fresh produce and use a separate one for raw meat, poultry and seafood.
- Never place cooked food back on the same plate that previously held raw food.
- Separate and keep sealed all raw meats from other foods in your grocery cart and refrigerator.
- To prevent juices from raw meat, poultry or seafood from dripping onto other foods in the refrigerator, place these raw foods in sealed containers or plastic bags.

Practice following these two rules; Clean and Separate, and next month we will talk about Cook and Chill.

Fruit and Pasta Salad

- ¾ cup uncooked pasta
- 1 cup cooked, chopped chicken
- 1 snack-size cup (4 ounces) mandarin oranges, drained
- ¼ cup each, halved seedless red and green grapes
- ¼ cup lowfat plain yogurt
- 2 tablespoons light mayonnaise
- 1½ teaspoons honey or sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger

Cook pasta, drain and rinse in cold water. In a small bowl, combine the pasta, oranges and grapes. Combine the yogurt, mayonnaise, honey or sugar and ginger; pour over salad and toss to coat. Refrigerate until serving. Serves 2.

Nutrition information per serving: 370 calories, 12 g fat, 70 mg cholesterol, 200 mg sodium, 36 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber.

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