What! It only just fell on the floor –
Isn’t there some sort of 5 second rule”?

Keep this in mind!

Food Should Make You Healthy and Happy

Whether it is during the holiday season or any other occasion, getting together to enjoy a meal with friends, family or church members is an enjoyable time. We just want to remind you that it is important that you understand and use good food safety practices.

Food poisoning is a very real and present danger for many people. According to the National Institutes of Health, there are about 48 million cases of food poisoning in the U.S. each year, with about 3,000 reported deaths. Many more cases of food poisoning go unreported because the symptoms can resemble the flu or other conditions and because most cases usually resolve on their own.

Despite the fact that America’s food supply is among the safest in the world, the unappetizing fact is that sometimes, the food we eat can make us sick. Although bacteria are everywhere, we can stay safe by practicing a few good rules and with a few everyday weapons such as soap and hot water, a refrigerator and a food thermometer.

Safe cooking temperatures:

- Beef, pork, veal & lamb steaks and roasts = 145 °F
- Ground Beef, Pork, Veal & Lamb = 160 °F
- Egg Dishes = 160 °F
- Fish = 145 °F
- Poultry or stuffing (dressing inside turkey) = 165 °F

It is safe to stuff the turkey with dressing but remove it after the bird has stood for 20 minutes once the bird is done. Alternatively, cook it separately.

Dressing made with raw meat, poultry or shellfish should be precooked.

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Safe food handling really matters
Proper storage, clean surfaces and equipment, keeping hot food hot and cold food cold, and preventing cross contamination will keep your family safe from food poisoning.

1. Clean:
The first rule of safe food preparation in the home is keeping everything clean.
*Wash hands* with warm water and soap for 20 seconds before and after handling food, using the bathroom, blowing your nose, or coughing or sneezing.
*Wash food-contact surfaces* (cutting boards, dishes, utensils, countertops) after preparing each food item and before going on to the next item.
*Rinse fruits and vegetables* thoroughly under running water and use a produce brush to remove surface dirt.
*Do not rinse raw meat* and poultry before cooking. Washing these foods makes it more likely for bacteria to spread to areas around the sink and countertops.

2. Separate:
*Don’t give bacteria the opportunity to spread from one food to another* (cross-contamination).
*While shopping*, keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood and their juices away from ready to eat foods while in the store, and while preparing and storing at home.
*Use one cutting board* only for foods that will be cooked (raw meat, poultry, and seafood) and another cutting board only for ready-to-eat foods (such as raw fruits and vegetables or salad fixings).
*Do not put cooked meat* on an unwashed plate or surface that has held raw meat.

3. Cook:
*Food is safely cooked when it reaches a high enough internal temperature to kill harmful bacteria.*
*Color* is not a reliable indicator of doneness.
*Use a food thermometer* to make sure meat, poultry, and fish are cooked to a safe internal temperature.
*Bring sauces, soups, and gravies* to a rolling boil when reheating.
*Cook eggs* until the yolk and white are firm.
*When making your own eggnog* or other recipe calling for raw eggs, use pasteurized shell eggs, liquid or frozen pasteurized egg products, or powdered egg whites.
*Don’t eat uncooked cookie dough*, which may contain raw eggs.

4. Chill:
*Refrigerate* foods quickly because harmful bacteria grow rapidly at room temperature.
*Refrigerate leftovers* and takeout foods within two hours.
*Set your refrigerator* no higher than 40 ºF and the freezer at 0ºF or below. Check both periodically with an appliance thermometer.
*Never defrost food at room temperature* or on the counter. Food may be defrosted safely in the refrigerator, under cold running water, or in the microwave. Food thawed in cold water or in the microwave should be cooked immediately.
*Don’t taste food that looks or smells questionable.* Experts say, a good rule to follow:

“*When in doubt, throw it out.*”

The following foods, and others, can quickly spoil and become unsafe: party platters, meat, poultry, seafood, dairy products, eggs, mayonnaise, and cooked vegetables.

Do not let food sit out at room temperature for more than 2 hours (1 hour if more than 90 ºF). Bacteria on food can grow to dangerous levels in just a few hours.

Reheat leftovers to 165 ºF

Watch for food poisoning signs including, headache, diarrhea, stomach pains, nausea, and vomiting.

To check a turkey for doneness, insert a food thermometer into the inner thigh area near the breast of the turkey but not touching bone.

24/7/365 HOTLINE: 1-800-222-1222
If you encounter a poison, call us – The Children’s Hospital of Michigan Regional Poison Control Center