

SAFE FOOD NEWS

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This newsletter can be found on the SafeFood web site.

Check it out at:

<http://www.colostate.edu/Orgs/safefood/>

Colorado State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Cooperative Extension programs are available to all without discrimination.

UPDATED WARNING FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN ABOUT MERCURY IN FISH AND SHELLFISH

As part of a low fat, heart-healthy diet, consumers are hearing the message to include more fish in their diets. The omega 3 fatty acids found in fish and shellfish are particularly important in ensuring the proper growth and development of the child, both in the uterus and after birth. These same fish, however, harbor methylmercury, a contaminant that if consumed in large enough quantities can damage the developing brain, causing severe learning disabilities and other neurodevelopmental problems in babies and young children. It also may be linked to risk of heart attack and sudden death in adults.

How Does Mercury Toxicity Occur?

Mercury is an element found naturally in the environment. It primarily gets into our food supply as a byproduct of industrial pollution. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), major sources of mercury emissions include coal-burning power plants, municipal waste combustors, medical waste incinerators and hazardous waste combustors. Mercury emissions from these and other sources are transported through the air and eventually deposit on water and land, where humans, wildlife and fish are exposed. Mercury can also directly contaminate land and water through industrial wastewater runoff. As mercury accumulates in streams and oceans, it accumulates in fish and animal tissue in its most toxic form, methylmercury.

Fish absorb methylmercury as they feed in contaminated waters. The risks from mercury in fish and shellfish depend on the amount of fish and shellfish eaten and the levels of mercury in the fish and shellfish. Larger fish that have lived a long time have the highest levels because they've had more time to accumulate it. When we regularly eat fish containing high amounts of methylmercury, it begins to accumulate in our blood systems. Once in our bodies, methylmercury is removed from the body naturally, but it may take over a year for levels to drop significantly.



New Advisory

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and EPA have long advised women of childbearing age about the connection between fish and methylmercury. In March, 2004, this advisory was upgraded to include albacore tuna and tuna steaks in the list of fish with high levels of mercury and to include children in the list of those who should monitor their fish intake. The new guidelines were issued after a FDA study found levels of mercury in fish and seafood are greater than previously believed. Specifically, new findings show “white” canned, albacore tuna has three times the mercury levels as the “light” tuna. The following guidelines target women who might become pregnant, women who are pregnant or nursing, and young children:

- 1) Do not eat Shark, Swordfish, King Mackerel, or Tilefish, because they contain high amounts of mercury.
- 2) Eat up to 12 ounces (2 average meals) a week of a variety of fish and shellfish that are lower in mercury.
 - Five of the most commonly eaten fish that are low in mercury are shrimp, canned light tuna, salmon, pollock, and catfish.
 - Because albacore (“white”) tuna and tuna steaks are higher in mercury than canned light tuna, no more than 6 of your 12 ounces of fish per week should be albacore tuna.
- 3) Check local advisories about the safety of fish caught by family or friends in local lakes, rivers and coastal areas. If no advise is available, it’s ok to eat up to 6 ounces per week of fish caught from local waters, but don’t consume any other fish during that week.

Controversy Surrounds Upper Limits

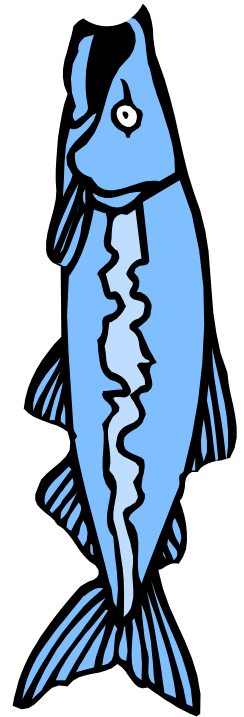
According to the EPA, about 7 million women and children are eating mercury-contaminated fish at or above the level it considers safe. Furthermore, recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) findings indicate that 8% of women of childbearing age in the U.S. have unsafe mercury levels, translating into over 300,000 babies born at-risk each year. The EPA’s methylmercury upper limit is based on bodyweight, also known as the reference dose. EPA’s methylmercury reference dose is 0.1micrograms/kg

body weight per day. Because body weight is a key factor in determining safe upper limits of fish consumption, amounts that may be safe for adults may in fact still be too high for young children. No specific limits on serving size are given for children. As a result, many advocacy groups think the new advisory is not protective enough. According to Michael Bender, director of the Mercury Policy Project, a 22 pound toddler eating only 2 ounces of albacore tuna per week with the average concentration found by the FDA would have an intake nearly 3 times the EPA’s reference dose. Furthermore, consumers eating the advisory’s upper limit of 12 oz. of certain high mercury fish in a given week could easily result in exposures well over the EPA reference dose.

Prudent Advice

The latest research on mercury measurements in fish is both reassuring and disturbing. It is clear that mercury contamination is a real health risk world wide to those who rely on and enjoy fish as part of their daily sustenance. However, it is reassuring to know that many types of fish can still be safely consumed on a regular basis. The new FDA/EPA advisory focuses its attention on those most affected by possible mercury toxicity. It also gives the general population an increased awareness that it is prudent to plan fish-containing meals around these guidelines. The advisory fact sheet can be found at:

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/admehg3.html>.



Sources:

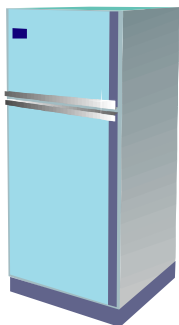
- 1) *What You Need to Know About Mercury in Fish and Shellfish*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Fact Sheet. March 2004.
- 2) *Mercury in Fish*. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency America’s Children and the Environment (ACE).
http://www.epa.gov/envirohealth/children/emerging_issues/fish.htm.
- 3) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s National Forum on Contaminants in Fish. San Diego, CA. January 25-28, 2004. Speakers: David Achesen, FDA. Kate Mahaffey, EPA.
- 4) *FDA’s Revised Mercury in fish Advisory Not Protective Enough for Women and Children*. Mercury Policy Project. Press Release by Michael Bender. March 24, 2004.

STORED FOOD: ENSURING ITS SAFETY AND QUALITY

Spring is here! Along with the many wonders of spring, comes the dubious task of spring cleaning. Whether your spring cleaning resembles a military operation or is a “lick and a promise,” be sure to include your kitchen cupboards, your freezer, and especially your refrigerator. As you clean, take time to evaluate the quality and safety of your stored food.

In the refrigerator:

- Purchase a thermometer to hang in your refrigerator and regularly check it. The optimal temperature for a refrigerator is between 35° and 40° Fahrenheit.
- At least three times a year, clean everything out of the refrigerator and wipe down walls and shelves with a solution of 1 tablespoon baking soda in 1 quart water. Clean out, then wash and dry all drawers. Do this once a month if your household includes someone who is elderly, pregnant, very young or chronically ill.
- Check expiration dates and “use-by” dates as you put foods back in the refrigerator. Make sure foods are either wrapped or in covered containers and dated to help with rotation. Rather than risk foodborne illness, throw away any food that is past its prime.
- Don’t overload the refrigerator. It is important to allow the cool air to circulate.



In the cupboards and pantries:

- Always think FIFO – first in, first out – when putting food away in your cupboard. Place new purchases behind the ones currently in the cupboard so that you rotate your stock, using up the older stock first.
- Check expiration and “use by” dates and discard any food that has expired or is past its prime. Date packages that have no dates on

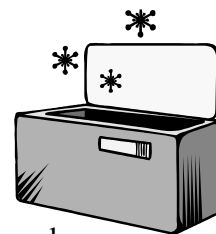


them. This is helpful when you are trying to rotate stock so that the oldest products are used first.

- Look for signs of spoilage. Throw away cans that are cracked, bulging, leaking, or squirt liquid when opened. Do not taste the food as it may be contaminated with potentially deadly organisms.
- Check for signs of insect or rodent infestation. Storing opened non-perishable foods in dry, airtight containers will help maintain freshness, and keep insects and rodents out.
- Make sure your cupboards and pantries are clean, dry, dark and cool. For optimal food storage, cupboards and pantries should be kept between 50° and 70° Fahrenheit.

In the freezer:

- Because bacteria do not grow at freezer temperatures, the most important issue with frozen food is maintaining its quality.
- Check the temperature of your freezer. For higher quality food storage, a temperature of 0° Fahrenheit or less should always be maintained.
- Make sure stored foods are wrapped sufficiently to minimize freezer burn. It’s recommended that foods purchased frozen be stored in their original packaging.
- Check labels on both commercially packaged frozen food and food prepared at home for “best used by” dates and/or the date frozen. If properly packaged, most food will maintain good quality in a freezer for at least six months. If in the past, you have not labeled food when you put it in the freezer – start now. Labeling each package with the type of food, date and number of servings makes it easy to identify what foods you have as well as better allows you to determine the foods’ freshness.
- Organize your freezer with the oldest foods in front so that they will be used first.
- Always remember, if in doubt, throw it out!



Source: Fact Sheet 9.310, Food Storage for Safety and Quality.
Available on-line at <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/>.

THE FIVE SECOND RULE: MYTH OR FACT?

Ever dropped a cookie on the floor, yelled “five-second rule,” then quickly picked it up and popped it into your mouth? The assumption is that five seconds is not a long enough time for your food to pick up harmful bacteria.

The exact origin of this urban legend is unknown, but supposedly, Genghis Khan was the first to make such a claim, specifying a lenient 12 to 20 hour period for food left on the ground to remain safe. The fast food industry also has been credited with the “rule,” supposedly to help minimize food waste. Whatever its origin, the “5 second rule” has become a readily accepted practice by young and old alike, especially to rationalize the eating of sweet foods like cookies that have fallen to the ground.

Rule Put to the Test

Last summer, Jillian Clarke, a high school student doing an apprenticeship at Hans Blaschek’s University of Illinois laboratory decided to test the validity of the 5-second rule. Clarke first surveyed 100 college students (50 male, 50 female) to see what they knew about the rule. Of those surveyed, 70% of the women and 56% of the men were familiar with and had used the 5-second rule. Cookies and candies were much more likely to be picked up and eaten than items such as cauliflower or broccoli.

Clarke then took swab samples from floors around campus to determine bacterial counts. The floors were surprisingly clean.

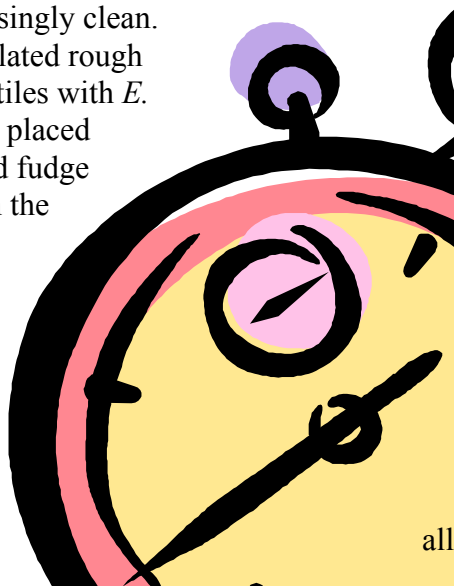
Next, Clark inoculated rough and smooth floor tiles with *E. coli* bacteria. She placed

Gummy Bears and fudge

striped cookies on the inoculated floor tiles for 5

seconds, then examined the foods under a high-powered microscope.

Her findings showed that in cases *E. coli* was



transferred from the tile to the food, demonstrating that microorganisms CAN be transferred from ceramic tile to food in 5 seconds or less. Clark found that more *E. coli* was transferred from smooth tiles than from rough tiles and that both the dry cookies and the gummy bears became contaminated with only 5 seconds of contact with the inoculated tiles.

Old Habits Die Hard

Clarke’s findings show there are no assurances that any type of dropped food is safe for any amount of time. Because germs are microscopic, there is no way to know what is growing on your floors. While it is likely that a bathroom floor may be more risky than a kitchen floor, one needs to assume that harmful bacteria may be present on any surface. It is time to re-think this age-old practice and stop rationalizing the use of the 5-second rule. As tempting as it may be, the next time some yummy morsel falls to the floor...into the trash it must go!

Sources:

- 1) *Five-Second Rule?* Science World. Jan. 12, 2004.
- 2) *If You Drop It, Should You Eat It? Scientists Weigh In on the 5-Second Rule.* ACES News Service. September 2, 2003.
<http://web.aces.uiuc.edu/news/stories/news2467.html>.

MOLDS ON FOOD: ARE THEY DANGEROUS?

You open the carton of cottage cheese in the back of the refrigerator only to find it covered with white mold. A half-used jar of jelly has bits of mold spots growing on it. Even the carefully wrapped chunk of cheese sports a fine covering of mold. Obviously it’s time to clean out the refrigerator. But, can any of the food be salvaged?

What Are Molds?

Molds are microscopic fungi that live on plant or animal matter, and can be transported by air, water or insects. Under a microscope, they look like skinny mushrooms, consisting of three parts: thread-like roots and branches that invade the food the mold lives on, a stalk rising above the food and spores that form at the ends of the stalks. It is the spores that give mold its color. Foods that have become moldy may also have invisible bacteria growing along with the mold.

Molds are found year-round in virtually every environment and are spread through dry spores that become airborne. They grow best in warm, humid conditions, but can also grow at refrigerator temperatures. Molds can tolerate salt and sugar and can thrive on high-acid foods like jams, jellies, pickles, fruit, tomatoes, and cured salty meats such as ham, bacon, salami and bologna.

Are Some Molds Dangerous?

Yes, some molds cause allergic reactions and respiratory problems in susceptible people. A few molds produce mycotoxins, poisonous substances that can make people sick. When a food shows heavy mold growth, “root” threads have invaded it deeply. Mycotoxins are most often contained in and around these threads, but also may have spread throughout the food. Mycotoxins are produced by molds that invade grain and nut crops, but may also be found on produce, including celery, grapes and apples. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations estimates that 25% of the world’s food crops are affected by mycotoxins, the most notorious of which are aflatoxins.

Aflatoxin is a cancer-causing poison produced by certain fungi in or on foods and feeds, especially field corn and peanuts. Aflatoxins can cause illness in livestock, domestic animals and humans. They are considered unavoidable contaminants of food and feed, even where good manufacturing practices have been followed. In the U.S., the FDA and USDA monitor peanuts and field corn for aflatoxin production and can remove any food or feed with unacceptable levels.

How to Minimize Mold Growth

Cleanliness is vital in controlling mold. Mold spores from affected foods can build up in one’s refrigerator, dishcloths, and other cleaning utensils. Tips to minimize molds are:

- Clean the inside of the refrigerator every few months with 1 tablespoon baking soda in one quart of water. Rinse with clear water and dry. Scrub visible mold (usually black) on rubber casings using 3 teaspoons of bleach in a quart of water.
- Keep dishcloths, towels, sponges, and mops clean and fresh. If they smell musty, they’re spreading mold. Discard items you can’t keep clean or laundered.

- Keep the humidity level in the house below 40%.
- Inspect grocery items such as bread before purchasing. Check food in glass jars, look at the stem areas on fresh produce, and avoid bruised produce. Notify the store manager about mold on foods!
- Examine cured meats and poultry. Exceptions: some salamis have a thin white mold coating which is safe to consume. Also, dry-cured country hams normally have surface mold that must be scrubbed off before cooking.

Precautions to Protect Food From Mold

- Process home-canned jams and jellies correctly in a boiling water bath canner for the recommended length of time at your altitude.
- When serving food, keep it covered to prevent exposure to mold spores in the air.
- Empty opened cans of perishable foods into clean storage containers and refrigerate them promptly.
- Refrigerate foods within 2 hours of preparation and serving.
- Buy food in amounts that can be used quickly. Use leftovers within 3 to 4 days, so mold doesn’t have a chance to grow.

How to Handle Food with Mold on It

When you see moldy food, avoid sniffing the moldy item. Discard the food by placing it into a small paper bag or wrapping it in plastic and disposing in a covered trash can away from children or animals. Clean the refrigerator or pantry, especially in the area where the food was stored, and check nearby items that the moldy food might have touched. Mold spreads quickly in fruits and vegetables.



A handy chart with information on whether to use or discard specific foods with mold is available from the FSIS/USDA website at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/oa/pubs/molds.htm>. In general, it’s best to discard any food that has become moldy, with the possible exception of hard cheese, hard salami, dry cured ham and firm produce like carrots and bell peppers. Because it’s difficult for molds to deeply penetrate these products, they can often be saved if not heavily molded. To save, cut off at least 1 inch around and below the mold spot, keeping the knife out of the mold itself to prevent

cross contaminating other parts. After trimming off the mold, re-cover in fresh wrap.

For more information, contact the FSIS Food Safety Education Staff Meat and Poultry hotline toll-free at 1-888-MPHotline.

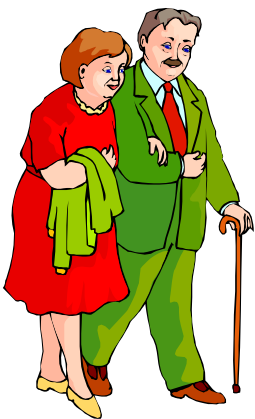
Reference: *Molds on Food: Are They Dangerous?* Food Safety Focus. USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline's Consumer Education and Information. April, 2002.

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/oa/pubs/molds.htm>.

ELDERLY AT HIGHER RISK OF FOODBORNE ILLNESS

Foodborne illness, especially among people of certain lifecycle stages, is an issue of increasing concern. Most often we hear about the risk of listeriosis and toxoplasmosis during pregnancy or *E. coli* infection among young children. However, older persons (age 65 and older) also are at higher risk of becoming ill from certain foodborne pathogens. According to recent government statistics, 35 million people (13% of the total population) are over age of 65 in the United States. By 2030, projections show that 20% of the population is likely to be over age 65 – about 70 million people. Therefore, foodborne illness in this population is a very important issue to address.

How Aging affects Risk of Foodborne Illness



As we age, our immune systems experience gradual changes. Immune cells respond more slowly, and we end up with decreased immunity against foreign pathogens. The gastrointestinal tract also changes during aging; motility and gastric acid production decrease, and the GI tract is more easily inflamed. These changes increase susceptibility to *Vibrio* infections, salmonellosis, and other illnesses. In addition, other factors associated with aging may increase risk of foodborne illness among the elderly, including disease, diabetes, slower digestion, a declined sense of taste and smell, decreased effectiveness of antibiotics, and the likelihood of malnutrition.

Pathogens of Special Importance

Pathogens that older persons are especially vulnerable to include *Salmonella* species, *E. coli* O157:H7, *Vibrio* species, *Clostridium perfringens*, *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Campylobacter jejuni*. *Salmonella* Enteritidis is of particular concern, as consumption of undercooked eggs is considered the most common risky food safety behavior among those over age 65. *E. coli* is another concern, as the mortality rate in nursing home outbreaks can reach 35%. Infections from *Vibrio* species occur at the highest rate in 65-74 year olds, with 5,500 cases per year according to FoodNet data. Finally, although elderly are not more susceptible to illness caused by *Campylobacter jejuni*, they are more at risk for serious complications and even death as a result of infection.

Preventative Behaviors of Special Importance

There are also certain behaviors of particular importance in preventing foodborne illness among the elderly. Because of their higher risk for *Salmonella* Enteritidis, the most important involves cooking eggs until both the yolks and whites are firm, and using a thermometer when preparing egg dishes. Other important behaviors for this population are similar to those critical for all high-risk groups, such as avoiding raw seafood, raw sprouts, unpasteurized milk and soft cheeses made from raw milk, washing hands thoroughly before food preparation, avoiding cross-contamination, cooking foods properly, washing fresh produce and refrigerating foods promptly.

The important issue of foodborne illness among the elderly will be a highlight of the 2004 Lillian Fountain Smith Conference scheduled for June 10 and 11 at the Marriott Hotel in Fort Collins, Colorado. Dr. Lydia Medeiros, Associate Professor at Ohio State University, will present “The Role of Food Safety in Protecting the Health of Older Adults” on Friday morning, June 11. More information about the conference is available at <http://www.caahs.colostate.edu/fshn/lfsc/>.

Sources:

- 1) U.S. Census Bureau, Population Projections at <http://www.agingstats.gov>
- 2) Smith, JL. Foodborne illness in the elderly. *J. Food Prot.* 1998;61:1229-1239.
- 3) Kendall, P., Medeiros, L.C., Hillers, V., Chen, G., DiMascola, S. 2003. Food handling behaviors of special importance to pregnant women, infants and young children, the elderly and immune-compromised persons. *J. Am. Dietetic Assoc.* 103:1647-1649.

HAND HYGIENE REVISITED: ANOTHER LOOK AT HAND SANITIZERS AND ANTIBACTERIAL SOAP

Typically, people carry between 10,000 and 10 million bacteria on each hand. We all know the importance of good hand washing in reducing harmful microorganisms on the skin, but what about those times when there is no access to hand washing facilities or not enough time to wash thoroughly? Can a hand sanitizer (alcohol gel) serve as a suitable alternative to hand washing?

How do hand sanitizers work?

Hand sanitizers (alcohol gels) have gained popularity because they are convenient and easy to use. The majority of hand sanitizers contain ethanol or isopropanol, or a combination of these two products. Most brands also contain a moisturizer to minimize irritation to the skin. Alcohol works immediately and effectively to kill bacteria and most viruses. Solutions containing 60-95% alcohol are most effective.



Higher concentrations are less potent because proteins are not denatured easily in the absence of water. Alcohol gels work by stripping away the outer layer of oil on the skin, thereby destroying any “transient” microorganisms present on the surface of the hands. After use, re-growth of bacteria on the skin tends to occur slowly, thereby effectively keeping “residual” micro-flora that reside in deeper layers of skin from coming to the surface. *To be most effective, a dime-size dollop of alcohol gel should be rubbed into the hands for 30 seconds. If hands are dry after only 10-15 seconds, it is likely that not enough sanitizer was used.*

A Substitute for Handwashing?

Research has shown that hand sanitizers can be as effective as hand washing only in certain situations. The type of soil which may be present on hands can significantly alter their effectiveness. Because dirt, food or anything else on your hands can make the alcohol less effective, it is important to first wash hands with soap and water. Some confusion has occurred as a result of the 2002 Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines “recommending alcohol-based gel as a suitable alternative to hand washing for health-care personnel in health-care settings.” Because many healthcare workers routinely must clean their hands multiple times per hour, the use of alcohol gels while moving between patients has been shown to favorably impact hand-cleansing adherence by staff due to time saved over traditional hand washing methods. However, the guidelines apply only to hospitals and clinics. These are not appropriate for and do NOT apply to those in foodservice settings.

Food Establishments vs. Healthcare Settings

The CDC guidelines for hand hygiene in healthcare settings do not apply to those in foodservice primarily because the types and levels of soil on the hands are quite different. The types of pathogens most commonly transmitted by hands in health-care settings (primarily lipophilic, nosocomial pathogens) differ from those in retail and food-service settings, where fecal bacteria and enteric non-lipophilic viruses, such as Norovirus are more of a concern. Food workers often have wet hands and hands contaminated with proteinaceous and/or fatty materials, which can significantly reduce the effectiveness of an alcohol gel. **Therefore, soap, friction and running water still remain most effective in removing the types of pathogens food workers might encounter.** Both the FDA Model Food Code and the Colorado Retail Food Establishment Rules and Regulations make the provision that hand sanitizers may be used by food workers in addition to, but not in place of proper hand washing. Because hand sanitizers are considered to be a food additive, only products approved by the FDA can be used.

Antimicrobial Soaps

Now let’s throw antimicrobial soaps into the mix. How do they rate over plain soap and water or alcohol gels? Antimicrobial soaps contain an antiseptic agent to help lower the number of microbial flora. Triclosan is the most commonly used chemical ingredient in antimicrobial soaps. A key factor in its effectiveness is that it must be left on the skin long enough to work, as in a good 30-45 second scrub. Companies have not published information on what combination of triclosan

concentrations and washing times are most effective, so it is difficult to know which brands work best. Also, there is concern that use of antimicrobial soaps may lead to bacterial resistance. While in theory this remains possible, research thus far has not found evidence that this is happening.

General Public



At home, plain soap and water is adequate for most consumer uses. There are situations, however, when antiseptic hand products are advised. Elaine Larson at the Columbia University School of Nursing in

New York recommends taking the extra precaution of using an alcohol gel or antibacterial soap for those in the following situations:

- Close physical contact with persons at high risk for infection (such as newborns, the very old, or immunosuppressed);
- Direct physical contact with someone having an upper respiratory infection, skin infection or diarrhea;
- Work settings where infectious diseases are commonly transmitted, such as child-care centers, preschools, prisons or chronic-care residences.

Bottom Line

Hand washing guidelines for healthcare workers should not be confused with recommendations for food workers or the general public. For everyone, washing hands with soap and water (whether plain or antimicrobial) is still a must. Hand sanitizers should primarily be used only as an optional follow-up to traditional hand washing with soap and water, except in situations where soap and water are not available. In those instances, use of an alcohol gel is certainly better than nothing at all.

Sources:

- 1) *Hand Hygiene in Retail & Food Service Establishments*. FDA/CFSSAN Food Service Safety Fact Sheet. May, 2003. <http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~comm/handhyg.html>.
- 2) *CDC Guideline for Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings*. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports (MMWR) October 25, 2002.
- 3) Larson, E. *Hygiene of the Skin: When is Clean Too Clean?* Emerging Infectious Diseases. Vol.7, No.2 Mar-Apr 2001.
- 4) Paulson, D.S. *Comparison of Hand washing Products*. Dairy, Food and Environmental Sanitation. 14: (9):524, 1998.

IN THE NEWS

COLORADO FOOD SAFETY SEAL OF COMMITMENT PROGRAM

If you are dining out in Summit County or Breckenridge anytime soon, be sure and look for restaurants displaying the new food safety seal of commitment. In an effort to recognize restaurants that make serving safe food a priority, the Colorado Food Safety Seal of Commitment program is being sponsored by the Colorado Restaurant Association Education Fund in partnership initially with Summit County and Breckenridge Colorado Restaurant Association Chapters and Summit County Environmental Health. The safety seal will be awarded to any food service operation that meets the following program requirements, which must be met annually:



- At least one manager must be trained and pass a Conference of Food Protection approved food safety manager certification exam.
- For both food preparers and food servers, at least 70% of full-time employees and 50% of part-time employees must be trained in an approved employee level food safety program and pass an employee food safety exam.

During the pilot phase, ServSafe® manager and employee level trainings are being offered at discounted costs to participating restaurants this spring. It is hoped that displaying the safety seal will be an effective way to communicate an establishment's investment in food safety to its customers, the media and sanitarians. Stay tuned for more details as the program expands to other areas in Colorado. For more information, contact the Colorado Restaurant Association at (303) 830-2972.



COMING EVENTS

SERVSAFE® TRAININGS

Denver Metro Region

Manager level ServSafe® trainings are offered monthly in the Denver metro area through the Colorado Restaurant Association. Cost: members - \$130; non-members - \$170. Please call 303-830-2972 for a complete schedule of dates and locations.

Northern Region Cooperative Extension

Contact Joy Akey (970) 332-4151

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Intended Audience</u>	<u>Fee</u>
07/13/04 1:30 – 6 pm	Ft Morgan, CO	<u>Spanish</u> Food Handler Trng Taught in Spanish	\$25 Deadline: 7/6

Western Region Cooperative Extension

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Intended Audience</u>	<u>Fee</u>
*05/20/04 8 - 5:30p	Eagle, CO *551 Broadway	Mgrs Certification Trng	\$85 Deadline: 5/14

Contact: Glenda Wentworth Ph: 970.328.8630

***Note:** Change of date & location from previous announcement.

Colorado State University

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Intended Audience</u>	<u>Fee</u>
5/17-5/21/04 8:40 - 11:25 am M-F	Ft. Collins, CO Rm. 203 Gifford Bldg.	Instructor & Mgr Trng	\$227.92

Listed as FN496E in CSU Summer schedule. 1 credit.

Contact: Pat Kendall Ph: 970.491.7334



Looking for Volunteers

We are looking for interested persons (Extension staff, nurses and dietitians) to pilot test an on-line continuing education course on Food Safety for High Risk Groups. The webcast is being launched in June and requires completion of 6 one-hour modules, with a brief evaluation component after each module. This is a great opportunity to receive free continuing education credit and also to gain valuable information about this emerging topic. If interested, please contact Mary Schroeder at mary.schroeder@colostate.edu or Pat Kendall at patricia.kendall@colostate.edu.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FOOD SAFETY CONFERENCE MAY 11 - 12, 2004 MORRISON, COLORADO

For innovative and cutting edge information on the food safety front, be sure to register for this year's conference, to be held at beautiful Red Rocks Amphitheatre Visitors Center. Attendees will be updated on *Campylobacter jejuni*, Mad Cow Disease, food safety initiatives between industry and regulators, Spanish food safety trainings materials, on-line food safety training opportunities, problems with equipment identity theft and maintaining food safety during a blackout. Last but not least, attendees will get some tips for improving interpersonal communication skills to help with customer relations. For more information, contact Raenette Hamann at 720-865-5374.

LILLIAN FOUNTAIN SMITH CONFERENCE JUNE 10 - 11, 2004 MARRIOTT HOTEL FORT COLLINS, COLORADO

Many of us look forward each year to the annual Lillian Fountain Smith conference for the opportunity to be updated on the latest nutrition-related topics. This year's conference is sure to spark some lively discussions, as Chris Melby, from our department, sets us straight on the carbohydrate craze. The new Lillian Fountain Smith Endowed Chair, Michael Pagliassotti, will present on sucrose and fructose in relation to disease states. Rebuilding of the Food Guide Pyramid will be addressed by Patricia Britten from USDA and by Susan Krebs-Smith from the National Cancer Institute.

Day two will update us on the important topic of Immunity and Aging. Dr. Kevin High, from Wake Forest University School of Medicine will speak on nutritional strategies to boost immunity and prevent infection in older adults. The affects of exercise on elderly immune function will be discussed by Robert Mazzeo, from the University of Colorado. Lydia Medeiros, from The Ohio Sate University, will wrap up the conference with a talk on the role of food safety in protecting the health of older adults. For more information or to register, go to www.cahs.colostate.edu/fshn/lfsc.

RESOURCES

New Food Safety Training Options

Training opportunities just got easier with the Food Marketing Institute's *Quick Reference to Retail Best Practices in Food Safety and Sanitation On-line*.

The program is designed to orient retail and wholesale food workers to the essentials of food safety and sanitation, utilizing a visual, user-friendly format. Current to the 2001 Food Code and 2003 Supplement changes, the cost is \$15, and is available in English or Spanish. For more information, go to <http://www.fmi.org/supersafemark/products.htm>, or call (850) 385-7915.

SuperSafeMark®

Co-developed by the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) and Pearson Education, SuperSafeMark® is a comprehensive food safety and sanitation training program for all levels of employees. Two-day train-the-trainer workshops are being offered, with the opportunity for workshop participants to sit for a nationally recognized and accepted Food Protection Certification examination. For more information, go to <http://www.fmi.org/supersafemark/training.htm>.

Food Safety Music

For anyone wanting to "liven up" a food safety training, Dr. Carl Winter at the University of California at Davis has developed an innovative, humorous, and effective musical approach for food safety education. Complete with accompanying PowerPoint slides, his food safety music CD, *Still Stayin' Alive*, is sure to capture your audience's attention. While there is no charge for the CD, donations to Dr. Winter are gladly accepted. Go to <http://foodsafety.ucdavis.edu/music.html>

Food Safety While Hiking, Camping, and Boating

This handout reviews general rules for outdoor food safety, along with useful suggestions for safely packing along food for your favorite outdoor activities. Go to <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/pubs/hcb.htm>.

"Sell By," "Use By" and Other Food Label Dates

These terms can be confusing even to those of us with a background in foods and nutrition. USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has a handy Fact Sheet, *Focus On: Food Product Dating*, that explains manufacturer product dating on everything from canned foods to egg cartons, baby formula and processed products. Included is a chart on safe storage times after purchase and information on safety after the product date expires. To download, go to: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/pubs/dating.htm>.



Food Safety for Babysitters

Have you ever come home from an evening out, only to find leftover food from the meal served your kids by the sitter still sitting out on the counter several hours later? Many parents have never thought about this topic before, when leaving a sitter in charge of feeding their infant or small children. However, because young children are vulnerable to foodborne illness, baby sitters now need to add one more thing to their list of competencies. University of Nebraska Extension has produced a useful Fact Sheet, *Food Safety for Babysitters*, which is available at:



<http://ianrpubs.unl.edu/foods/nf103.htm>.

This newsletter was prepared by Food Science & Human Nutrition Extension Specialists:

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