

Top 10 Food Safety Myths

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September is National Food Safety Month!

About one in six Americans – 48 million people – will get a foodborne illness this year, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates. The Partnership for Food Safety Education, at <http://www.fightbac.org/> wants to help keep you and your loved ones from becoming part of that statistic! Read on to learn of some common food safety myths you might not be aware of.



MYTH #1: Cross contamination doesn't happen in the refrigerator.

FACT: Some bacteria can survive and grow in cool, moist environments. In fact, *Listeria Monocytogenes* grows at temperatures as low as 35.6 degrees F. Clean your refrigerator regularly with hot water and soap.

MYTH #2: I don't need to clean the refrigerator produce bin because I only put fruit and vegetables in there.

FACT: Naturally occurring bacteria in fresh fruits and vegetables can cause cross-contamination in your refrigerator. A recent study found that the refrigerator produce compartment was the #1 "germiest" area in consumers' kitchens.

MYTH #3: I don't need to rinse this melon — the part I eat is on the inside!

FACT: A knife or peeler passing through the rind can carry pathogens from the outside into the flesh of the melon. Play it safe and rinse your melon.

MYTH #4: I eat a vegetarian diet, so I don't have to worry about food poisoning.

FACT: Fruits and vegetables may carry a risk of foodborne illness. Always rinse produce under running tap water.

MYTH #5: Leftovers are safe to eat until they smell bad.

FACT: Smell is not an indication of whether food is safe to eat! Freeze or toss refrigerated leftovers within 3 - 4 days.

MYTH #6: Freezing food kills harmful bacteria that can cause food poisoning.

FACT: Bacteria can survive freezing temperatures. Cooking food to the proper internal temperature is the best way to kill harmful bacteria.

MYTH #7: Putting chicken in a colander and rinsing it with water will remove bacteria like Salmonella.

FACT: Bacteria in raw meat and poultry can only be killed when cooked to a safe minimum internal temperature, which for poultry is 165°F. Save yourself the messiness of rinsing raw poultry. It is not a safety step and can cause cross-contamination!

MYTH #8: Only kids eat raw cookie dough and cake batter.

FACT: Just a lick can make you sick! No one of any age should eat raw dough.

MYTH #9: Once a hamburger turns brown in the middle, it is cooked to a safe internal temperature.

FACT: The ONLY way to know that food has been cooked to a safe temperature is to use a food thermometer, 160°F for ground beef. Visual clues are NOT a good indicator of doneness.

MYTH #10: If I microwave food, the microwaves kill the bacteria, so it's safe.

FACT: It's the heat generated by microwaves that kills bacteria in foods and it must be completely heated to a safe internal temperature. Be sure to follow package instructions and rotate and stir foods during the cooking process if instructions call for it.

For more information about this topic or other topics, contact the Wildcat Extension District offices at: Crawford County, 620-724-8233; Labette County, 620-784-5337; Montgomery County, 620-331-2690; Pittsburg Office, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education (EFNEP), 620-232-1930. Wildcat District Extension is on the Web at <http://www.wildcatdistrict.ksu.edu>. Or, like our Facebook page at facebook.com/wildcat.extension.district.

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CONFETTI RICE AND BEAN SALAD

Serves: 6 | Serving size: 3/4 cup

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup instant brown rice, uncooked
- 1 cup tomatoes, chopped (about 1 medium)
- 2 medium carrots (finely chopped or grated)
- 2 tablespoons onion (finely chopped)
- 1 cup frozen corn
- 1 can (15 ounces) black beans (drained and rinsed)
- 1/4 cup lime juice
- 1/4 cup oil (canola, vegetable, or olive)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cook rice according to package directions and let cool.
2. Wash and cut up the tomatoes, carrots, and onion while rice is cooling. Put the vegetables into a large bowl.
3. Add frozen corn to the bowl.
4. Drain and rinse black beans and add to the bowl.
5. Add cooled rice to the bowl.
6. Whisk together the lime juice, oil, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Pour this over rice and vegetable mixture and stir gently to combine.
7. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes before serving to let flavors mingle.

TIPS

- Add color and flavor with 1 teaspoon cumin, 1 tablespoon dried parsley, or 3 tablespoons fresh parsley (minced).
- Substitute 1 can of corn for frozen corn.

Nutrition Facts:

Calories 260; Total fat 11 g, Sat. fat 1g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 310mg; Total Carb 36g; Dietary fiber 7g; Sugars 3g; Protein 7 g; Vitamin A 70%; Vitamin C 20%; Calcium 4%; Iron 10%.

Source: Spend Smart. Eat Smart. Iowa State University Extension