

NEWSLETTER FOCUSING ON FOOD SAFETY ISSUES

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PATCO FOOD SAFETY CONSULTANTS PRESENTS:

THE LATEST DIRT



Food-Borne Illness Peaks In Summer - Why?

Year after year, we hear and read the same advice: Handle food carefully in the summer because food-borne illness — also known as "food poisoning" — is more prevalent in warmer weather. Do food-borne illnesses increase during the summer months? If so, why?

Yes, food-borne illnesses do increase during the summer, and the answer appears to be twofold. First, there are the natural causes. Bacteria are present throughout the environment in soil, air, water, and in the bodies of people and animals. These microorganisms grow faster

in the warm summer months. Most food-borne bacteria grow fastest at temperatures from 90 to 110 °F. Bacteria also need moisture to flourish, and summer weather is often hot and humid.

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LATEST DIRT

To our valued customers:

Patco Food Safety Consultants is proud to offer our valued clients a quarterly update relating to food safety issues and concerns.

Patco hopes you enjoy these newsletters and encourages any comments, questions or thoughts to be addressed to Patco at the following
Fax# 1-315-652-5671

The Latest Dirt will focus on sanitation topics, regulatory issues, general housekeeping hints for clean establishments, updates on new laws relating to food safety issues and general discussions regarding the benefits of good sanitation and the impact it has on profits and safety in your establishments

Food-Borne Illness Peaks in Summer - Why? - continued

Given the right circumstances, harmful bacteria can quickly multiply on food to large numbers. When this happens, someone eating the food can get sick.

Second, there are the "people" causes for the upswing in summertime food-borne illnesses. Outside activities increase. More people are cooking outside at picnics, barbecues, and on camping trips. The safety controls that a kitchen provides — thermostat-controlled cooking, refrigeration, and washing facilities — are usually not available.

Fortunately, people seldom get sick from contaminated food because most people have a healthy immune system that protects them not only from harmful bacteria on food, but from other harmful organisms in the environment. At the same time, FSIS, other government agencies, and food producers go to great lengths to keep food safe. And, of course, consumers can protect themselves at home with proper refrigeration and thorough cooking of perishable food.

We know food-borne illness increases in warm weather. We also know that consumers can Fight BAC!® by following these four simple steps to safer food in the summertime.

Clean: Wash Hands and Surfaces Often.

Unwashed hands are a prime cause of food-borne illness.



- Wash your hands with warm, soapy water before handling food and after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and handling pets.

When eating away from home, find out if there's a source of potable (safe drinking) water. If not, bring water for preparation and cleaning. Or pack clean, wet, disposable washcloths or moist towelettes and paper towels for cleaning hands and surfaces.

Separate: Don't Cross-Contaminate. Cross-contamination during preparation, grilling, and serving food is a prime cause of food-borne illness.

- When packing the cooler chest for an outing, wrap raw meats securely; avoid raw meat juices from coming in contact with ready-to-eat food.

Wash plates, utensils, and cutting boards that held the raw meat or poultry before using again for cooked food.

Cook: Cook to Proper Temperatures.

Food safety experts agree that food is safely cooked when it is heated for a long enough time and at a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria that cause food-borne illness.

- Take your thermometer along. Meat and poultry cooked on a grill often browns very fast on the outside, so be sure that meats are cooked thoroughly. Check them with a food thermometer.

- Cook beef, veal, and lamb steaks, roasts, and chops to a safe minimum internal temperature of 145 °F. Cook steaks and roasts that have been tenderized, boned, rolled, etc., to an internal temperature of 160 °F.

- Cook all cuts of pork to an internal temperature of 160 °F.



- Cook ground beef, veal and lamb an internal temperature of 160 °F.

- All poultry should reach a safe minimum internal temperature of 165 °F throughout the product.

Cook meat and poultry completely at the picnic site. Partial cooking of food ahead of time allows bacteria to survive and multiply to the point that subsequent cooking cannot destroy them.

Chill: Refrigerate Promptly.

Holding food at an unsafe temperature is a prime cause of food-borne illness. Keep cold food cold!

- Cold refrigerated perishable food

like luncheon meats, cooked meats, chicken, and potato or pasta salads should be kept in an insulated cooler packed with several inches of ice, ice packs, or containers of frozen water.



- Consider packing canned beverages in one cooler and perishable food in another cooler because the beverage cooler will probably be opened frequently.

- Keep the cooler in the coolest part of the car, and place in the shade or shelter, out of the sun, whenever possible.

- Preserve the cold temperature of the cooler by replenishing the ice as soon as it starts melting.

- If a cooler chest is not an option, consider taking fruits, vegetables, hard cheeses, canned or dried meats, dried cereal, bread, peanut butter, crackers, and a bottle of refreshing beverage.

Take-out food: If you don't plan to eat take-out food within 2 hours of purchase, plan ahead and chill the food in your refrigerator before packing for your outing.

Leftovers?

Food left out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours may not be safe to eat. Above 90 °F, food should not be left out over 1 hour. Play it safe; put leftover perishables back on ice once you finish eating so they do not spoil or become unsafe to eat.

If you have any doubts, throw it out.



Source: www.fsis.usda.gov

Food Safety Management Program

Frequent Sanitation deficiencies written by Health Inspectors on their visits to your stores. Please review and follow up.

1. Food and containers of food shall not be stored under refrigeration units in walk-in cooler. There is potential contamination from leaking condensate.
2. Containers of food shall be stored on dollies, skids or racks at least 6" off the floor in walk-in coolers and freezers at all times.
3. Be sure to clean dust accumulation on fan covers of refrigeration units on a regular cleaning schedule.
4. All spray bottles containing cleaning chemicals must be labeled with name of chemical, use instructions, any restrictions and hazard information. Be sure to use proper chemical in a labeled spray bottle. In other words, do not use glass cleaner in a sanitizer labeled spray bottle.
5. Proper MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheets) on all chemicals are to be kept on the premises of your store.
6. Employees shall consume food or drink only in designated areas. Such designated areas are to be located outside any food prep areas.
7. Containers of cleaning chemicals are not to be stored over or next to food prep tables.
8. Do not store spray bottles of cleaning chemicals by trigger head in a rack over a food prep area.
9. Store all utensils in clean containers with handle extended out of container which prevents hand contact with food surface of the utensil.
10. Refrigeration units used to store potentially hazardous food must have a numerically scaled indicating thermometer accurate to +/- 3°F. This thermometer must be located in the refrigeration unit so as to be easily readable. Try to keep thermometer in front of unit. The temperature of the refrigeration unit must be 41°F or less. Foods should be identified and labeled. Foods must be properly covered to prevent potential contamination.
11. Wiping Cloths - Cloths and sponges used for wiping food spills on food contact surfaces of tables and equipment shall be cleaned and rinsed frequently in the Patco sanitizing solution. These cloths and sponges shall be stored in a sanitizer labeled container with diluted sanitizer solution when not in use. Single service disposable towels are permitted in lieu of wiping cloths or sponges if they are discarded after every use. Cloths used for wiping food spills on tableware such as plates and bowls being served to the consumer, shall be dry and used for no other purpose. Sponges shall not be used in contact with cleaned, sanitized or in use food contact surfaces.
12. Keep lids on outside dumpsters closed at all times when not being used for disposal.
13. Ice dispensing for human consumption shall be dispensed by employees using a scoop, tong or other ice dispensing utensils or through automatic single serve ice dispensing equipment. Ice dispensing utensils shall be stored on a clean surface OR in the ice with the dispensing utensil's handle extended out of the ice. Do not store dispensing utensil on top of ice maker or any other unclean surface.
14. The temperature of potentially hazardous foods shall be 41° or below or 135° or above at all times, except during periods of preparation.
15. Restrooms - please make sure you have hand soap, paper towels, and toilet paper available. Also make sure you have "Employee Must Wash Hands" sign posted. Make sure restrooms are clean and rid of odor.
16. Hand wash sinks - nothing is to be stored in the hand wash sinks. Please make sure you have hand soap, and paper towels available. Also make sure you have "Employee Must Wash Hands" sign posted. Do not store anything in front of or blocking hand wash sink.
17. Sanitizer test strips available in the food prep sink areas.
18. Personal items such as purses should not be stored on a table in the food prep area, but must be stored in an area such as locker outside of food prep area.

Source: Pat Killorin R.S.
Patco Food Safety Consultants



E Coli - Nestle's Cookie Dough Recall

Correction: An earlier version of this story included a video report from MSNBC-TV that incorrectly stated ice cream products containing Toll House cookie dough should be thrown out. The recall does not affect ice cream products.

SOLON, Ohio - Federal authorities are investigating a new national outbreak of a bacteria-triggered illness, this time related to a sweet treat treasured by the heartbroken and children-at-heart — packaged raw cookie dough.

The federal Centers for Disease Control said its preliminary investigation shows “a strong association” between eating raw refrigerated cookie dough made by Nestle and the illnesses of 65 people in 29 states whose lab results have turned up E. coli bacteria since March.

About 25 of those people have been hospitalized, but no one has died. E. coli is a potentially deadly bacterium that can cause bloody diarrhea, dehydration and, in the most severe cases, kidney failure.

Nestle USA voluntarily recalled all of its Toll House refrigerated cookie dough products after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration advised consumers to throw away any Nestle Toll House cookie dough products in their homes and asked retailers, restaurateurs and other foodservice operations not to sell or serve any of the recalled products.

Customers also can return any recalled product where they bought it for a full refund. The recall does not affect other Toll House products, including ice cream that contains raw Toll House dough.

FDA spokesman Michael Hern-

don said officials were confident that Nestle refrigerated dough products caused the outbreak.

“This has been a very quickly moving situation,” said Roz O’Hearn, spokeswoman for Nestle’s baking division, adding the company took action within 24 hours of learning of the problem.

Spokeswoman Laurie MacDonald for Nestle USA in Glendale, Calif., a unit of Switzerland-based Nestle SA, said the company has temporarily stopped making the refrigerated dough products while the FDA investigates the Ohio factory where they were made.

“We hope to resume production as soon as possible,” she said.

Nestle holds a 41 percent share of the prepared cookie dough market.

The recall includes refrigerated cookie bar dough, cookie dough tubs, cookie dough tubes, limited edition cookie dough items, seasonal cookie dough and Ultimates cookie bar dough. Nestle said about 300,000 cases of Nestle Toll House cookie dough are affected by the recall, which covers chocolate chip dough, gingerbread, sugar, peanut butter dough and other varieties.

The FDA said consumers should not try to cook the dough, even though it would be safe to eat if cooked, because the bacteria could move to their hands and to countertops and other cooking surfaces.

Raw cookie dough is so popular that it has spawned more than 40 groups on Facebook, complete with postings that read like love notes.

Stacey Oyler, a 33-year-old San

Francisco resident, called it her “secret indulgence” — a treat that became irresistible when she was pregnant with her second child last August. She said she still indulges occasionally.

“I love the combination of the salt and sweet,” she said. “You can’t get that from a piece of chocolate.”

But no raw cookie is necessarily safe. The eggs in Nestle Toll House’s dough are pasteurized, which eliminates most of the risk of salmonella infection from raw eggs. But other ingredients could contain pathogens or bacteria, and the company warns in product labels not to eat the dough raw.

Several recent food recalls have been related to bacterial contamination, including a salmonella outbreak last winter traced to a peanut company that sickened more than 600 people and that was blamed for at least nine deaths. A separate outbreak of salmonella last year linked to jalapeno peppers from Mexico led 1,400 people to become ill.

Sarah Klein, staff attorney in the food safety group at consumer advocacy group Center for Science in the Public Interest, called the cookie dough news disheartening.

“Unfortunately, I don’t think that people who have been working in food safety for years can be surprised at this point and sadly, I don’t think the American people are surprised either,” Klein said.

Source: www.msn.com

