

HEALTH BULLETIN

Food-borne Illnesses

Summer is a time for cookouts, barbecues, and sharing!

But the more hands that are involved in preparing your food, the higher your chance of getting a *food-borne illness*.

- You can get sick when you eat or drink something that has germs on it.
- Food can be exposed to germs at the factory (the building where food is processed), the grocery store, or by touching unclean objects or hands.

You may have heard about **E.coli** in the news recently.

- Many people have been sick after eating food contaminated with E.coli.
- Some foods have a high risk of infection with E.coli.
- Examples are raw milk, raw apple cider, and soft cheeses made from raw milk.



The latest multi-state outbreak of E.coli has been linked to **romaine lettuce**.



Image source: www.cdc.gov

Many people choose raw milk thinking it will improve their health.



But it can cause serious illness.



What is raw milk? What is pasteurization?



Raw milk has not been pasteurized to kill harmful, disease-causing germs, including bacteria, viruses, and parasites.

Pasteurization is the process of heating milk to kill harmful bacteria.

You can come in contact with E.coli in different ways, such as:

- Eating an undercooked hamburger
- Eating foods that are making people sick with E.coli
- Swallowing water while swimming and playing in lakes, ponds, swimming pools, and backyard "kiddie" pools
- Changing diapers
- Touching the ground, objects, or animals on farms, in petting zoos and other animal exhibits
- Eating food prepared by people who did not wash their hands well after using the bathroom



Images source: www.cdc.gov

To learn more about this outbreak and E.coli, visit www.cdc.gov



Who is at risk for food-borne illness?

Almost everyone has some risk.

These people have the most risk for problems from food-borne illnesses:



- Pregnant women
- Elderly
- People with weakened immune systems (from cancer, HIV or other conditions)

What are the symptoms?

- ✓ Vomiting
- ✓ Low fever (less than 101°F)
- ✓ Diarrhea (often bloody)
- ✓ Severe stomach cramps



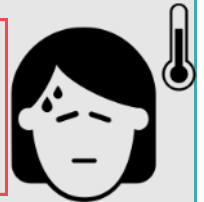
Is there treatment?



NO. Drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration.

Call your doctor if you:

- Have diarrhea that lasts for more than 3 days
- Have blood in your stool
- Are vomiting so much that you cannot keep liquids down
- Are urinating small amounts
- Have a high fever



How can I prevent food-borne illness?

If you are pregnant, elderly, or immune-compromised, **DO NOT EAT** these foods:

- Soft, raw cheeses
- Foods that have raw or undercooked eggs in them
- Bean sprouts
- Raw ciders and juices
- Raw shellfish
- Deli meats and hot dogs. If you do eat them, you should first cook them to 165°F or until steaming hot
- Raw milk and dairy products made from raw milk

When preparing food:

- Always wash your hands well with soap and water before you prepare or eat food.
- **DON'T prepare food if you have diarrhea or vomiting!**
- Clean all surfaces and utensils before and between each use.
- Keep **hot foods hot** and **cold foods cold**.
- Refrigerate unused food **within 1 hour**.
- Use separate cutting boards for meat and produce.
- Cook foods to proper temperature and use a food thermometer.
- Thaw frozen meat in a refrigerator, **NOT** on a countertop.
- Separate raw foods from cooked and ready-to-eat foods. Don't put cooked meat on the same platter that held raw meat.



Stay Cool, Philly!

Did you know?



Very hot weather is dangerous for everyone and can make you sick. Watch out for signs of heat-related illness.

Heat Exhaustion



Symptoms:

- Heavy sweating
- Headache
- Weakness, fatigue, dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting



What to do:

- Go to an air-conditioned space
- Sip cool water
- Take a cool shower or bath
- Call your doctor if symptoms last for more than one hour

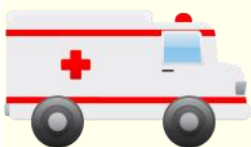


Heat Stroke



Symptoms

- Very high body temperature
- Confusion
- Pounding headache
- Nausea
- Unconsciousness



If you see someone with these signs, call 911—this is a medical emergency!

What you can do!

✓ Stay Cool



- Avoid direct sunlight
- Stay in air-conditioned buildings
- Wear light, loose-fitting clothing

✓ Stay Hydrated



- Drink plenty of water – don't wait until you're thirsty
- Avoid alcohol, caffeine and sugary drinks (they can dehydrate you)

✓ Stay Informed



- Stay updated on local weather
- Know the signs of heat-related illness

✓ Look out for others



- Check on elderly and homebound neighbors
- **NEVER leave people or pets in a parked car on a hot day**
- If you see someone experiencing homelessness who needs help, call 215-232-1984

If you think someone is having a medical emergency, call 911

Staying Healthy and Safe During Severe Storms

- Flooding presents many risks to people in Philadelphia, including health hazards.
- It is important to prepare before a storm happens.

What can I do before a storm?

Prepare enough supplies to last you and your family 3 days.

Place a check-mark next to each item as you put your kit together!

- Medications** →
- Food and water** →
- Supplies for babies and children** →
- Pet supplies** →
- Cell phone and charger** →
- Flashlight and whistle** →
- Cash** →
- Copies of important papers** →
- First-aid kit** →
- Battery-powered radio and extra batteries** →

What should I do during and after a flood?

Avoid flood waters:



- Flood waters contain harmful germs.
- Wash your hands if you touch flood water.

Ensure your tap water is safe:



- If your tap water is not safe, local officials will provide instructions about what to do.
- Keep bottled water in your preparedness kit (1 gallon per person for 3 days).

For example, a **family of 4** would need:

12 Gallons of water

That means, **12** of these →



Avoid mosquito bites:



- Get rid of standing water.
- Make sure window and door screens are in place.
- Use mosquito repellent.

If you lost power:



- Throw away food that has been in a non-running refrigerator for more than 4 hours.
- Replace medications that need to be refrigerated.