Arkansas SNAP Ed
Smart Nutrition-Active People Education

RightBite!

A Newsletter for Healthy Eating

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In This Issue

About Foodborne Illness
Purchasing Tips
Thrifty Sanitizer
Avoid the Lunch Box Bug
Right Bite Recipe
Safe Lunch 101
Safe Foods to Pack

Fight BAC

Foodborne illness (food poisoning) is caused by eating unsafe food. Foodborne illness has the same symptoms as the flu – nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps and diarrhea. Sometimes people think they have the flu, but they really have foodborne illness caused by eating food containing harmful bacteria.

It is estimated that millions of Americans suffer from foodborne illness every year. Some people – especially children, seniors and those with weakened immune systems – can experience more severe symptoms or even die from foodborne illness.

Tips to Help You FIGHT BAC

- Wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds to help remove as much bacteria as possible.
- Wash hands before preparing food, after touching raw meat, sneezing, coughing or going to the bathroom.
- Wash cutting board in hot, soapy water and then sanitize after working with raw meat.
- Never defrost meat, poultry or seafood at room temperature.
- Refrigerate or freeze food within 2 hours of cooking.

Food Safety Is Important!

DID YOU KNOW?

The average kitchen sponge contains 7.2 billion bacteria. Change those sponges often!

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This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact *https://access.arkansas.gov/*.

Tips When Purchasing Food

- Plan ahead and buy only what you will eat in a "safe" amount of time and consume foods before the expiration date on the package label.
- Do not buy damaged containers, even if they are on sale. These containers may have broken seals that allow bacteria such as *E. coli* to grow in the product.
- Make the grocery store the last errand on your list. Do not allow foods to linger in the car, and refrigerate as soon as you get home.

BAC FACT

Myth: *It will harm my refrigerator or ruin other foods if I put hot food inside, so I should let food cool first.*

Fact: It's not true. Hot food will not harm your refrigerator nor ruin other foods. In fact, prompt refrigeration of foods will keep your food and you safer. For quicker cooling, divide large quantities of food into shallow containers before refrigerating.

For more myths and tips, go to www.fightbac.org.

Thrifty Sanitizer

This sanitizing solution will kill the same harmful bacteria as expensive commercial sanitizers but cost much less. You can make your own sanitizing solution at home for less than 1 cent per day.

Recipe for Thrifty Sanitizer – Add 1 teaspoon of chlorine bleach to one quart of water. Put solution in spray bottle. Be careful not to get this on your clothing!

Compare the Cost!

Solution	Cost Per Quart
Thrifty Sanitizer	Less than $0.01 per day
Green Works All-Purpose Cleaner	$3.39
409 All-Purpose Cleaner	$3.35
Lysol Plus Bleach	$3.19
Clorox With Bleach	$3.99

Thrifty sanitizer recipe courtesy of Colorado State University Cooperative Extension.

Avoid the Lunch Box Bug

An average of 3 to 4 hours passes every school day from when lunchboxes are packed to when they are eaten. Children usually store their lunches in a locker, on a shelf, or in their backpacks – locations warm enough to allow bacteria to grow.

Even the most nutritious brown bag lunch cannot resist the lunch box bug – commonly known as foodborne illness.

Germs that make you sick can grow in food if it is not kept at a safe temperature (below 40° F or above 140° F). Check out **Packing a Safe Lunch 101** for ways to prevent these germs from growing in food when you pack a school lunch box.

Right Bite Recipe

Tuna Apple Salad Sandwiches

Ingredients

- 1 can (6½ ounces) tuna in water, drained
- 1 small apple, finely chopped
- ¼ cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 1 teaspoon mustard
- 6 slices whole wheat bread

Directions

1. Combine tuna, apple, yogurt and mustard.
2. Spread mixture on three bread slices, and top each with lettuce and tomato.
3. In a sack lunch, keep sandwich cold by refrigerating using an ice pack or frozen juice box. Makes 3 servings.

Packing a Safe Lunch 101

- Put something cold in the lunch box. A fun trick is to freeze a juice box overnight and to put it in the lunch box next to the sandwich. That way, the sandwich will not get too warm and your child will have a cold drink at lunchtime!
- Freeze the sandwiches. The sandwich will be thawed by the time your child eats lunch.
- Teach your children to keep their lunch box in the coolest place possible while at school.
- Use a thermos if necessary to keep milk or juice cold until lunchtime.
- Teach your child to throw away all food left from lunch.
- Wash and sanitize lunch box or bag after each use.

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Safe Foods to Pack in a School Lunch

Here is a list of kid-friendly lunch box foods that do not need refrigeration and can be packed safely.

- Peanut butter sandwiches
- Cookies, crackers and muffins
- Cereals, pretzels and popcorn
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Dried fruits
- Canned and bottled juices
- Jam, jelly and honey
- Unopened cans of fruit and pudding
- Canned meat, poultry and fish that can be opened and eaten immediately.

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For more information on food, nutrition, or health, contact your county Extension office or visit www.uaex.edu.

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