



# Top 10 Food Safety Tips

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## Special points of interest:

- Every year, an estimated 1 in 6 Americans (48 million people) get sick.<sup>1</sup>
- 128,000 hospitalized.<sup>1</sup>
- 3,000 deaths from foodborne diseases.<sup>1</sup>

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## A knowledgeable kitchen staff is your greatest ally in protecting guests and preventing foodborne illness

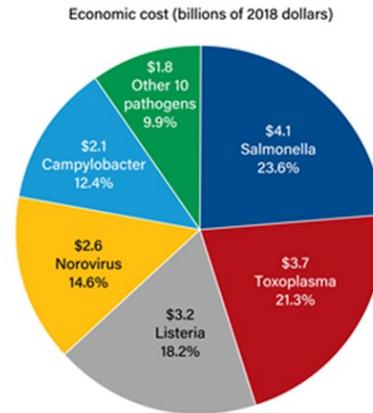
The Federal Government estimates that there are about 48 million cases of foodborne illness annually, the equivalent of sickening 1 in 6 Americans each year. Each year these illnesses result in an estimated 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths.<sup>1</sup> 31 pathogens are known to cause foodborne illness, many of these pathogens are traced by public health systems that track diseases and outbreaks. The top 6 germ causing illness, hospitalizations, and deaths from food eaten in the United States include: Norovirus, *Salmonella* (non-typhoidal), *Clostridium*

*perfringens*, *Campylobacter*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, and *Salmonella* (typhi).<sup>2</sup>

The spread of germs from the hands of food workers to food is a common cause of foodborne illness outbreaks in restaurants. It accounts for nine of ten outbreaks. Federal guidelines (FDA food code) recommend how and when food workers should wash their hands, but not all workers fol-

low them<sup>3</sup>. Germs are easily transferred from the hands of employees to food during meal preparation. Operators need to be sure their staff are following proper guidelines so guests can be confident that their choice of restaurant will not get them sick.

Five pathogens caused most foodborne illness costs in United States



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service (ERS) using data from ERS Cost of Foodborne Illness Data Product.

## Food Safety Culture

Food safety culture is the shared values, beliefs and norms that affect mindset and behavior toward food safety throughout an establishment. It is the result of the commitment from leadership and focus across the establishment. It encompasses how employees perceive their role in ensuring food safety and the policies and procedures they work under.

A good food safety culture starts from the top with leadership that sets a strong example by following best practices in the workplace<sup>4</sup>.



**Myth or Fact: Foodborne Illness:**<sup>5</sup>

1. The taste of food will tell you if it's bad.

**Myth:** Foods that are contaminated with listeria, E. coli, salmonella, etc., can all taste great.

2. Foodborne illness can happen within a few hours.

**Fact:** The most common ones, such as staphylococcus or clostridium happen within a few minutes to a few hours, and you can feel really awful, but last for only about a day or so. More serious ones such as salmonella or E. coli, take longer for the illness to appear. Sometimes several days. Illness from listeria can take two months before symptoms appear.



**1 Good Hand Hygiene**



Good hand hygiene is your first line of defense in preventing foodborne illness. Workers wash their hands when they should about one in three times.<sup>3</sup>



**2 Exclusion and Restriction**

Sick workers have no place in foodservice. 12% of foodborne employees report having worked when they were sick with vomiting and diarrhea.<sup>3</sup>

**Take your Food's Temperature**

**3** Proper cooking temperatures are key to killing hazardous pathogens. The temperature range in which disease causing bacteria multiplies the quickest in TCS food is the "Temperature Danger Zone" temperatures between 41°F and 135°F.<sup>7</sup>



**4 Cooling**

Cool foods promptly and properly. Illness causing bacteria can double in TCS foods every 20 minutes, unless they are refrigerated. Cold temperatures slow the growth of illness causing bacteria.<sup>6</sup>

**5 Labeling & datemarking**

Have a system in place for date marking and labeling all foods, especially those that are required to be date marked. Any food item not stored in its original packaging must be labeled.<sup>7</sup>

**6 Cross Contamination**



Raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs can spread illness-causing bacteria to ready-to-eat foods. Cutting boards or utensils used with raw meats and vegetables without thoroughly cleaning and sanitizing them after each use and before beginning a new task.<sup>7 & 8</sup>



**7 Cleaning**

Cleaning removes dirt, food debris and residues. Sanitizing reduces pathogens that may be present to safe levels. Food contact surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized after each use, or every 4 hours if in continual use.<sup>7</sup>

**8 Glove use**



Gloves should be worn to prevent bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods. Single use gloves should be used for only one task at a time and for no other purposes. Failure to wear gloves by foodservice employees who are preparing ready-to-eat foods can lead to contamination.<sup>7</sup>



**9 Washing of fruits and vegetables**

Raw fruits and vegetables should be washed to remove soil and other contaminants before being cut, combined with other ingredients, cooked, served, or served as RTE.<sup>7</sup>

**10 Employee training**

A knowledgeable kitchen staff is your greatest ally in protecting guests and preventing foodborne illness. Each new kitchen staff member should be regularly given instruction on proper cleaning and sanitizing protocols.<sup>7</sup>

Sources:

1. What You Need to Know about Foodborne Illnesses | FDA
2. Foodborne Germs and Illnesses | CDC
3. Food Worker Handwashing in Restaurants | EHS-Net | EHS | CDC
4. The Importance of Food Safety Culture - Safe Food Alliance

5. Myth or Fact: Foodborne Illness - IFT.org
6. Refrigerator Thermometers - Cold Facts about Food Safety | FDA
7. FDA Food Code 2017.pdf (ncdhis.gov)
8. 4 Steps to Food Safety | FoodSafety.gov