Preventing Food-borne Illness in the Kitchen
Follow these four steps: Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill

Food-borne illness facts

- People can get sick from food that is contaminated with disease causing germs.

- These illnesses usually cause one or more of the following: diarrhea, vomiting, fever, headache, fatigue, stomach pain, nausea.

- Symptoms can begin hours or even days after eating contaminated food, but usually illness begins within one to three days.

- If food is not cooled, cooked, prepared or stored correctly, germs can multiply to high numbers and can cause illness.

- Food can cause illness even if it looks, smells and tastes normal.

- Do not wash raw meat, poultry or eggs. Washing these foods can spread germs because juices may splash onto your sink or counters

Did you know?

- *Produce with a peel such as cantaloupes, watermelons, and avocados must be washed before slicing them open.*

- *Fruits and vegetables labeled "prewashed" do not need to be washed again at home.*

Clean
Wash hands and surfaces often

- Wash your hands with soap and warm running water for at least 20 seconds before preparing food.

- Wash all produce before preparing. *Never* wash meat and poultry products before cooking.

- Clean and sanitize all utensils, cutting boards, sinks and counter-top surfaces completely before and after preparing food, especially raw meats. Follow these three easy steps:

    1. *Wash all items with hot soapy water*
    2. *Rinse with hot water*
    3. *Sanitize with 1 teaspoon unscented bleach per gallon of water*

*Keep a supply of bleach solution in a labeled spray bottle near the sink to sanitize all surfaces.

Separate
Don't cross-contaminate

- Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs away from read-to-eat foods and always use separate cutting boards.

- Keep raw meat, poultry and seafood stored separately in sealed containers or plastic bags on the lowest shelf in the refrigerator.

- Sauce that is used to marinate raw meat, poultry or seafood should not be used on cooked foods unless it is boiled first.

(over)

Cook

Cook to the right temperature

- Cooking is the only way to kill germs in food.
- Use a metal stem thermometer to check cooking temperatures. These thermometers can be purchased at most major grocery and hardware stores.
- Keep food hot after cooking (140° F).

Safe internal cooking temperatures:

Eggs………………………………145°F

Rare roast beef…………130°F

Steak……………………145°F

Eggs ……………………145°F

Fish ……………………145°F

Chicken and Turkey …..165°F

Ground Beef …………..155°F

Pork ……………………145°F

Reheating leftovers ……165°F

Did you know?

Germs that cause food poisoning multiply quickest in the "Danger Zone" between 40° and 140°F.

Chill

Refrigerate quickly

- Always put food away quickly and use a thermometer in your refrigerator. Keep temperatures at *41° F or below.*
- Refrigerate foods within two hours.
- Never thaw or marinate foods on the counter.

Did you know?

For quick thawing of meats, you can put it in a plastic bag and place in cold water for about an hour. Or put it in the microwave on the "defrost" setting.

Cooling Tips:

- *Don't overfill the refrigerator or freezer.*
- *Don't block the refrigerator or freezer fan.*
- *Foods cool faster in small, shallow uncovered containers in the refrigerator or freezer. Once food has cooled to 41° F, you can move it to a larger container.*

If you think you have a food-borne illness:

- See your health care provider if symptoms are severe or last for more than a few days.
- Avoid preparing foods for others.
- Always wash your hands well after going to the bathroom and before eating or preparing food.

- Write down everything you ate or drank in the past three days and call your local health department.

Questions?

Contact, Tri-County Health Department at 720-200-9200 or visit us at: www.tchd.org

Tri-County Health Department

EPC-49 (9/2016)