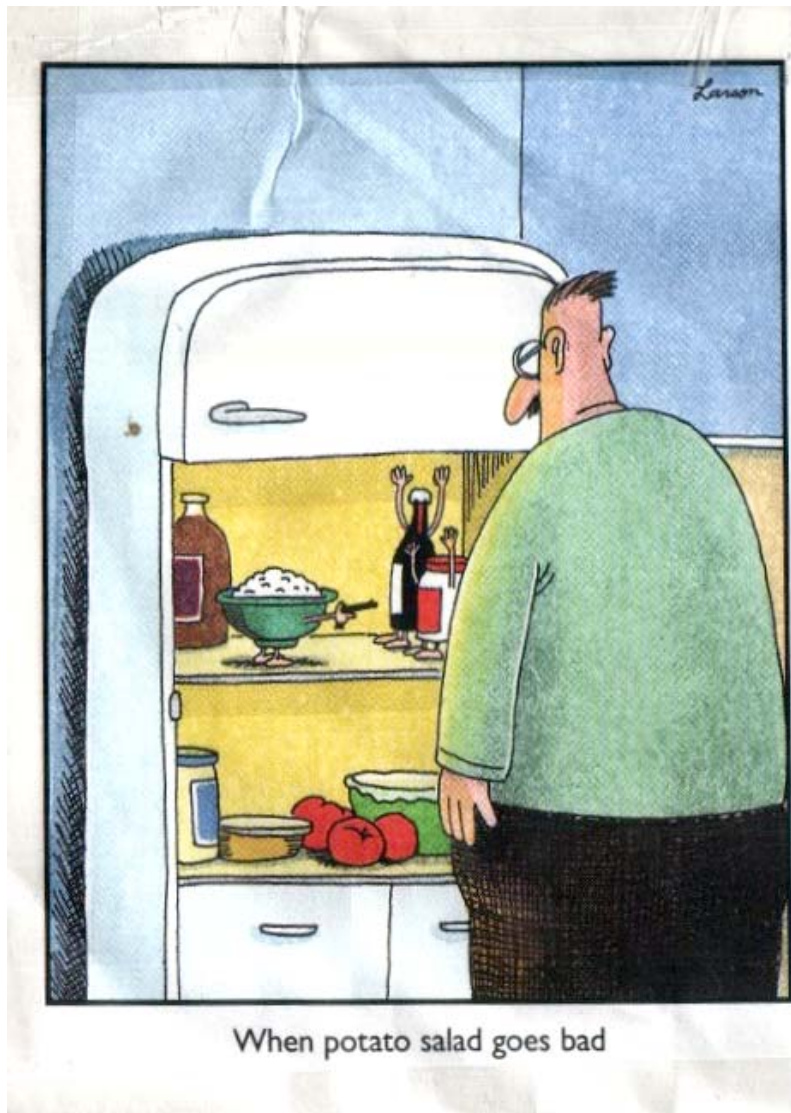


Food Safety and Seniors



Multnomah County Environmental Health

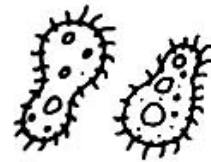


When potato salad goes bad

The Far Side® October,

1928

Alexander Fleming discovers penicillin after noticing that none of the bacteria he is culturing in a petri dish will grow near the mold that sprouts there.



Monday 30

What is a Food Borne Illness?

A food-borne illness or what is commonly known as food poisoning is caused by **Bacteria, Viruses, Parasites, and Toxins.**

- **Bacteria** are single celled living organisms that can live in a variety of food. **Salmonella** which can be found in dairy foods, poultry and eggs is one example.
- **Viruses** are smaller than bacteria and only grow in other living cells. **Hepatitis A** is a virus that spreads when a food worker does not wash their hands well after using the bathroom.

Why should seniors be concerned about Food Borne Illnesses?

- Seniors are at a greater risk of acquiring a food-borne illness due to a number of factors such as: **decreased stomach acid production, weakened immune systems, malnutrition, and decreased stomach motility.**
- As we age there is a natural **decrease in stomach acid production.** Without enough stomach acid, **bacteria** consumed are more likely to reach the small intestine where they can cause problems.
- The **immune system weakens as we age** which affects the body's ability to fight off disease. This can be compounded by **medication, digestive disorders, chronic illnesses, or physical disabilities** which all **weaken the immune system.**

What Should A Senior Do To Prevent Food Borne Illness?

- Obey the 4 rules of food safety:

Clean – Separate – Cook - Chill

- **Clean**-Wash hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and water as hot as you can comfortably stand. Wash any surface that comes into contact with raw foods, such as cutting boards, or sinks with hot, soapy water and sanitize with bleach (a tablespoon of bleach per gallon of water).
- **Separate**-Avoid **cross-contamination** which is the transfer of microorganisms from one food or surface to another. This is done by washing hands before and between handling different types of food, and using different cutting boards and utensils for raw and ready-to-eat foods.
- **Cook**-Heat foods to minimum safe internal temperatures. Example: poultry 165 F, ground meat 155 F, fish 145 F.
- **Chill**-Cool cooked food as quickly as possible. Food must be cooled from 140 F to 70 F in two hours, and from 70 F to 41 F or lower in four hours, for a total cooling time of six hours or less. Never defrost food at room temperature. Thaw food in refrigerator, under cold running water, or in the microwave.

What Should A Senior Avoid?

- Raw fin fish and shellfish, including oysters, clams, mussels, and scallops.
- Raw or unpasteurized milk or cheese.
- Soft chesses such as Feta, Brie, and Mexican-style cheese.
- Raw or lightly cooked egg or egg products including salad dressings, or cookie batter.
- Raw meat or poultry
- Unpasteurized or untreated fruit or vegetable juice.



Checklist for Seniors On Safe Food Handling

Daily Food Routine

- Where do seniors receive food?
- How do they store it when it's received?
- How are items being re-heated?
- Are hands being double-washed after activities such as gardening, cleaning, using the bathroom, and so forth?

Food Storage

- Are the refrigerator and freezer shelves and floors clean and free of spillage, and foods free of slime and mold?
- Is the freezer temperature 0 degrees F or below and refrigerator 41 degrees F or below?
- Are refrigerated foods covered, dated, labeled and shelved to allow air circulation?
- Are foods stored correctly?
- Is dry storage maintained in a manner to prevent rodent/pest infestation?

Food Preparation

- Are cracked eggs being used only in foods that are thoroughly cooked such as baked goods or casseroles?
- Are frozen raw meats and poultry thawed in the refrigerator or in cold, running water? Are cooked foods cooled down safely?
- Are food contact surfaces and utensils cleaned to prevent cross-contamination and food-borne illness?

- Review CHILL, COOK, SEPARATE and CLEAN brochure.