

Take Control



A Hands-on Approach to:
**Choosing Safe Foods,
Shopping, Handling,
Preparing & Storing Food**
for Persons Living with HIV/AIDS



Food Safety and HIV

A **foodborne illness** is any illness that comes from a food you eat. **Pathogens** are organisms (such as bacteria and viruses) that cause disease.

Pathogens in food can make you sick and cause mild to life-threatening illness. It is important for persons infected with HIV to be careful about the food they eat.

You can't tell if a food contains germs that can make you sick. Bacteria that cause foodborne illness may not change the food's look, taste, or smell.



There are 76 million cases of foodborne illnesses each year in the U.S. These result in 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths.

People who have increased risk for foodborne illness include those who are immune compromised.

- A study in 1991 found that Listeriosis (caused by **Listeria**) is 300 times more frequent in people with AIDS than in the general population.
- A study in 2003 estimated that a person with AIDS is 12–20 times more likely to get a **Salmonella** infection than someone in the general population.

Some foods are *riskier* than others

Where food comes from, how it's processed, and how it's stored and prepared—all affect the risk that foods will contain pathogens.

Risky Foods

Raw or undercooked animal products, including raw or undercooked meat, fish, and poultry, as well as raw eggs, raw milk, raw fish, and raw shellfish are the foods that are most likely to contain pathogens.

Other risky foods include:

- Unpasteurized fruit juice
- Raw sprouts (like alfalfa)



In addition, some ready-to-eat foods are risky for HIV-infected individuals because they may be contaminated with *Listeria*.

Ready-to-eat foods that may have *Listeria* include:

- Hot dogs and lunch meats
- Soft cheeses made with raw milk
- Refrigerated pâtés or meat spreads
- Refrigerated cooked or smoked seafood and fish (may be labeled as nova-style, kippered, lox, or jerky)



The most important way to reduce your risk of *Listeria* infection is to be certain your refrigerator temperature is less than 40°F (check with a thermometer) and only store refrigerated perishable foods for 4 days or less.

What should I know about *Listeria*?

- *Listeria* is a bacteria found in animal products and soil.
- *Listeria* is killed by cooking, canning, or pasteurization.
- *Listeria* can grow in the refrigerator.
- Ready-to-eat foods that were re-contaminated in the processing plant after cooking or pasteurization can have *Listeria*.
- Some companies that make hot dogs and lunch meat now produce meats that are low risk for *Listeria*. You can contact companies to ask if the product is formulated to prevent *Listeria* growth.

Choosing Safe Foods...

Higher Risk Foods	Lower Risk Foods
Undercooked meat and poultry	Thoroughly cooked meat (use a food thermometer)
Raw or undercooked seafood	Fully cooked seafood
Raw or undercooked eggs	Eggs that are cooked until the white and the yolk are firm
Raw milk	Pasteurized milk
Foods that contain raw eggs, such as some desserts and salad dressings made at home or in restaurants	At home, use pasteurized eggs or egg products for uncooked foods (most foods from grocery stores are made with pasteurized eggs)
Raw sprouts (like alfalfa, bean, or any other raw sprout)	Well-washed fresh vegetables or cooked sprouts
Soft cheeses made from raw milk such as Feta, Brie, Camembert, blue-veined, queso fresco, queso blanco, and Panela cheeses	Hard cheeses, processed cheeses, cream cheese, mozzarella, or soft cheeses made from pasteurized milk
Refrigerated smoked fish and pre-cooked seafood, such as shrimp and crab	Smoked fish and seafood heated to 160°F or canned fish
Cold hot dogs, deli meats, and lunch meats	Hot dogs, lunch meats, and deli meats reheated to steaming hot or 160°F
Unpasteurized chilled juice	Refrigerated juice labeled as pasteurized, canned juice, or frozen juice concentrate
Refrigerated pâtés and meat spreads	Canned pâtés or meat spreads

Shopping

- Do not buy food that has been displayed in unsafe or unclean conditions.
- Read labels on foods for food safety information. Look for expiration dates.
- Pick up perishable foods last. Refrigerate them promptly.



Perishable foods include meat, milk, and any other foods that support the growth of bacteria.

Refrigerated Foods

“Sell By” Dates: Refer to how long a refrigerated product should be shown on display in a grocery store. The food will likely remain safe well after this date, but in an immune compromised state, it is best to avoid eating foods that are past the sell-by date. Throw away ready-to-eat foods or leftover foods after 4 days.



“Use By” Dates: Refer to the product’s safety and should be taken seriously. **DO NOT** consume any products that are past their “Use By” dates.

Canned, Frozen, and Dry Foods

“Best If Used By” Dates: Refer to the flavor and the quality of the product, **NOT** its safety. While it may be safe to eat after the date, it may not taste as good.

Shopping Tips

- Put packaged meat, poultry, or fish into a plastic bag before placing it in the shopping cart.
- Purchase fruit juice from the refrigerated section, and milk, cheese, and other dairy products only if they are labeled as pasteurized.
- Always refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours. Refrigerate within 1 hour when the temperature is above 90°F. Plan to come directly home from the grocery store. In hot weather, you may want to take a cooler with ice or ice gel for perishables.
- Check your refrigerator temperature with a thermometer. It should be between 35–40°F.



Pasteurization:



- Pasteurization is the process of heating food to a temperature that kills pathogens.
- Raw milk is another term for unpasteurized milk.
- The FDA requires that cheese made with raw milk must be aged more than 60 days. Aged hard cheeses made from raw milk such as Parmesan, Cheddar, Swiss, and Romano are safe to eat. Fresh, soft cheeses made from raw milk may contain pathogens.

Handling and Preparing Food at Home

Wash Hands

- Wash hands well with soap and warm water before handling food, after using the toilet, after changing a baby's diaper, coughing or sneezing, and after touching animals.



Cook Foods Adequately

- Use a food thermometer to make sure meat and poultry (including ground) are cooked to safe temperatures (see box on page 9).
- Use a thermometer to make sure leftovers are reheated to 165°F.
- Cook shellfish until the shell opens and the flesh is fully cooked. Cook fish until the flesh is firm and flakes easily with a fork or 145°F.
- Cook eggs until both the yolk and white are firm.

Tips for home pasteurization:

- If you make your own juice or purchase fresh cider, heat to 160°F before you drink it.
- To pasteurize your own eggs, use a saucepan and stir together eggs and either 1/4 cup sugar, water, or other liquid from the recipe. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly until it reaches 160°F. Add to recipe.



Cooking to Safe Temperatures

A recent USDA study found that 1 in every 4 hamburgers turns brown in the middle before it has reached a safe temperature. The only way to be sure your food has been cooked to a safe temperature is to use a **food thermometer**.

Two types of instant-read food thermometers:



Digital thermometer

- ✓ It's quick
- ✓ Temperature is measured at the tip
- ✓ Must be inserted at least a 1/2-inch into the food
- ✓ Takes at least 10 seconds to reach temperature reading

Dial thermometer

- ✓ Readily available
- ✓ Must be inserted at least 2–3 inches into the food
- ✓ Takes 15–20 seconds to reach temperature reading



Tips for using food thermometers

- Test the middle of the thickest part of what you are cooking.
- With hamburgers or other thin meats, lift meat out of the pan and insert food thermometer sideways.
- Clean thermometer between uses by rinsing under hot running water for 5 seconds and wiping dry with a paper towel.

Safe Cooking Temperatures



180°F	Chicken and turkey— whole bird, legs, thighs, & wings
170°F	Chicken & turkey breasts
165°F	Ground turkey & chicken Leftovers Hot dogs & lunch meat
160°F	Ground meat— Ground beef and pork Pork & ham Game meat Egg dishes (firm yolk and white)
145°F or higher	Beef, lamb, veal steaks and roasts (medium rare) Fish (or flakes with a fork)

Note: chicken, turkey, and other poultry are cooked to a safe temperature when all parts reach 160°F. Most people prefer the flavor and texture of poultry cooked to 165°F (for ground poultry), 170°F (for white meat), and 180°F (for dark meat).

FDA-suggested cooking times for oysters, mussels, and clams:

- **Boiled:** Cook them until the shells open and then cook for 5 more minutes.
- **Steamed:** Cook them until the shells open and then cook for an additional 9 minutes.
- **Shucked:** Boil for at least 3 minutes or fry in oil at least 10 minutes at 375°F.

Avoid Cross-Contamination

- Wash knives, cutting boards, and food preparation areas with hot, soapy water after touching poultry, meat, and seafood.
- Wash hands with soap and warm water after handling foods.
- Thoroughly rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running water before eating.
- Keep cooked and ready-to-eat foods separate from raw meat, poultry, seafood, and their juices.



Cross-contaminate—Spreading bacteria from one food to another.

Keep Foods at Safe Temperatures

- Store all perishable foods at or below 40°F.
- Store eggs and poultry in the refrigerator.
- Thaw foods in the refrigerator or under cold running water—do not defrost on the counter at room temperature. If thawing meat in the refrigerator, put it on a tray or plate to avoid dripping meat liquid onto other foods.
- Do not prepare food more than 2 hours before serving without plans for proper cooling.
- Take only foods that can be kept at safe temperatures in carried meals such as lunch boxes, picnics, and potluck dinners.



Properly Storing Leftovers



Storing leftovers correctly is important for fighting bacteria and other pathogens that grow on food.

Here are a few tips:

- **One of the most important things you can do to protect yourself from *Listeria* infection is to keep your refrigerator below 40°F.** Check your refrigerator temperature with a thermometer. It should be between 35–40°F.
- **Consume perishable and ready-to-eat foods as soon as possible. Freeze or discard ready-to-eat perishable food after 4 days.**
- Refrigerate all prepared and leftover foods within 2 hours of serving.
- Store all perishable foods such as eggs, meat, and dairy at or below 40°F.
- Small amounts of warm food may be put in the refrigerator in covered containers.
- For larger portions of food put the food in shallow containers and cool uncovered. Once food is cooled, seal with a lid to preserve quality.

Remember, food safety starts with you!!!

- Wash your hands
- Cook food thoroughly
- Avoid cross-contamination
- Keep foods at safe temperatures
- Avoid risky foods



Common symptoms of foodborne illness include:

- Diarrhea
- Stomach ache
- Fever
- Nausea/Vomiting
- Headache
- Chills

Note: Serious complications such as a long-term illness and even death occasionally occur.

For More Information:

Food and Drug Administration

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~mow/intro.html>

Food Safety and Inspection Service

www.fsis.usda.gov

Government Food Safety Information

<http://www.foodsafety.gov/~fsg/fsgpath.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—Foodborne Diseases

<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pubs/brochure.htm>

Washington State University

<http://foodsafety.wsu.edu>

Project team leaders: *Val Hillers and Verna Bergmann* (Washington State University), *Lydia Medeiros and Gang Chen* (Ohio State University), and *Pat Kendall and Mary Schroeder* (Colorado State University).

Author: *Emily Willmore Hoffman.*



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