What is food safety?

Food safety

Ensuring the **safety of food** is a shared responsibility among producers, industry, government, and consumers. Food safety involves the safe handling of food from the time it is grown, packaged, distributed, prepared, and stored to prevent food-borne illnesses. **Safe food** is food that is free not only from toxins, pesticides and chemical and physical contaminants, but also from microbiological pathogens, such as bacteria, parasites and viruses that can cause illness.



June 7, World Food Safety Day

Food sanitation

Everyone involved in food production, food processing, food preparation and food service must have essential information about basic microbiology, how food becomes contaminated, and the importance of personal hygiene and **good work habits.** Workers who understand why **food sanitation** is so important are more likely to use safe practices.

A food handler is anyone who works in a food business and who either handles food or surfaces that are likely to be in contact with food.

Food handlers have **specific responsibilities** related to their health and hygiene and for doing whatever possible to make sure that they do not make food unsafe or unsuitable to eat. They must wear clean outer clothing, not eat, smoke, sneeze, blow or cough over unprotected food. They must wash their hands before they start handling food, immediately after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief, eating, drinking, smoking and using the toilet.

These **standards of sanitation** are just as important and valid **in home kitchens,** as most cases of food-borne illnesses actually begin at home.

The Golden rule for food storage is: "Keep food clean, keep cold food cold and hot food hot and keep food covered".



as: *poichè*
food-borne: *di origine alimentare*
handling: *gestione*
processing: *trasformazione*
sanitation: *igiene*
shared: *condiviso*

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1 PAIR WORK In turns, ask and answer the following questions.

1. Who should share the responsibility of ensuring food safety?
2. Which steps does food safety involve?
3. When can food be considered safe?
4. Who is a food handler?
5. What should all food handlers be informed about? For what purpose?
6. What general responsibilities do food handlers have?
7. What essential standards of sanitation must a food handler observe?
8. Are such standards of sanitation only valid for professional food handlers? If not, why not?

2 Complete these *Food-safety at home rules* with '*always*' or '*never*', depending on what YOU do in the kitchen. Then, turn over the page to check if you do the right things.

1. I ..... wash my hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm, running water before beginning food preparation and after handling raw food.
2. I ..... keep all work areas clean and use separate surfaces for different types of foods.
3. I ..... leave food out of the refrigerator for more than two hours since illness-causing bacteria can grow rapidly.
4. I ..... refrigerate or freeze leftovers within two hours of preparation to reduce the chance of bacteria growing.
5. I ..... eat perishable foods that have been left out at room temperature for more than two hours.
6. I ..... taste food to check if it has spoiled.
7. I ..... throw away all expired food before harmful bacteria grow.
8. I ..... eat raw eggs because they may contain Salmonella or other harmful bacteria
9. I ..... defrost foods in the refrigerator, cold water or in the microwave.
10. I ..... sanitize sponges in the microwave for two minutes once per day and replace them often to help reduce germs.





FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

Our food may be exposed to contaminants while being cooked, prepared, packed or stored. Packaging for instance plays a critical role in protecting food against contamination and is essential to maximize shelf life. Yet, these materials must be safe. Their safety relies on ensuring that no release into the food of chemical substances occurs in unsafe levels from materials involved in the food processing chain, packaging or kitchenware.

1. always; **2.** always; **3.** never; **4.** always; **5.** never; **6.** never; **7.** always; **8.** never; **9.** always; **10.** always.

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