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Foodborne Illness

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 48 million people become sick from some type of foodborne illness. Of these 48 million, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die. Moreover, acute foodborne illnesses cost the United States an estimated \$78 billion each year in healthcare, workplace, and other economic losses. There are more than 250 known foodborne diseases. These diseases may be caused by bacteria, viruses or parasites. However, other natural or harmful chemicals that are in food products can cause illness.



These various diseases have many different signs and symptoms, so there is no one specific "syndrome" that is a foodborne illness. The bacteria or toxins enters the body through the gastrointestinal tract, and usually causes the symptoms there first. The common symptoms of foodborne illnesses are abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.

There are several chances for food to become contaminated during production and preparation. Many of these diseases are present in healthy animals (usually in the intestines) that are raised for food. Meat and poultry may become infected during slaughter through contact of minimal amounts of intestinal contents. Bacteria can be introduced from infected humans who handle food, or by cross contamination with other raw foods

Foodborne illnesses typically arise from improper handling, preparation, or storage of food. It is essential to practice good hygiene before, during, and after food preparation which can reduce the chances of acquiring a foodborne illness. Finally, the most effective defense against the spread of a foodborne disease is proper and regular handwashing.

For more information concerning foodborne illnesses [click here](#).

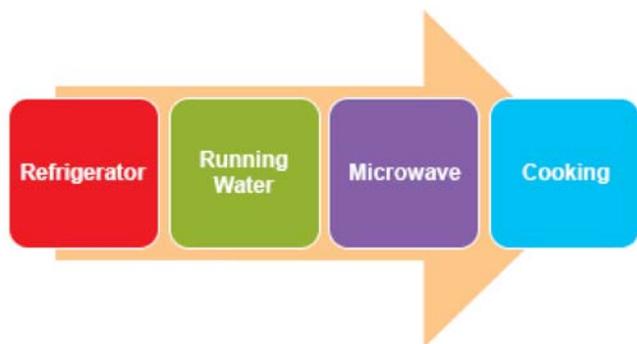
Importance of Properly Defrosting Food

Millions of people experience some form of foodborne illness every year. Some forms of these illnesses can be prevented by properly defrosting foods. By adhering to proven safe food-handling techniques, you can reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

Never defrost food at room temperature, on the kitchen counter top, or in standing water. Following one of the below techniques will help prevent foodborne illness:

- **Place food in a refrigerator at 41°F or less.** This is the safest and easiest way to defrost. Defrosting in the refrigerator takes a little more planning. Place food in the refrigerator well in advance of cooking.

Acceptable Methods of Thawing



- **Place food under cold running water at 70°F or less for no more than 2 hours.** Never defrost potentially hazardous food in standing water. Bacteria may grow in the outer layers of food before the inside completely thaws.
- **Use a microwave to defrost, if the food will be cooked immediately afterwards.** Do not freeze the food again until it is cooked thoroughly.
- **Defrost as part of the cooking process.** Products, such as frozen meat patties can be defrosted and cooked in a single step.

For more information, please contact the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health, Division of Environmental Health Services (DEHS) at (800) 442-2283 or visit our [website](#).

Food Recalls

Food recalls that affect California (either state-specific recalls or nationwide recalls) are posted on the [DEHS Food Recalls page](#) Monday – Friday, excluding holidays. Food recalls are also posted on our social media sites.

You can sign up to receive emails about food recalls by going to www.recalls.gov/food.html and clicking on "Sign Up for Free Recall Updates by Email." You will receive recall information from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) via these emails.

If you have a smartphone, you can download the "Recalls.gov" app to view recalls on your phone. Additionally, you can type a product name into the app or use the app's barcode scanner to see whether a product has been recalled.

Stay Connected to DEHS with Social Media

Follow our social media sites to get the latest news on food safety and foodborne illness prevention, mosquito and vector control, pool safety and drowning prevention, and more!

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If you have any questions or comments, please contact Scott Stanley, Health Education Specialist II at 800-442-2283 We can also be reached by email at Scott.Stanley@dph.sbcounty.gov.

We appreciate the effort you make to protect the public's health in our County.