



Food Safety Tips for Eggs

Eggs provide essential nutrients that are part of a healthy diet. However, the nutrients that make eggs a high-quality food for humans also make eggs a favourable place for bacteria to grow. Like all foods, it is important to handle and prepare eggs with care.

Eggs can occasionally be contaminated with *Salmonella* or other microorganisms that can cause illness. It is also possible to contaminate eggs with bacteria from other foods. To avoid getting food-borne illnesses from eggs, follow these food safety tips.

Shop Carefully

- Choose only refrigerated Grade A or AA eggs. Ungraded eggs carry an increased risk of being contaminated with *Salmonella* or other food-borne illnesses.
- Check that all of the shells are clean and uncracked.
- Check the “best before date” on the package.
- When shopping, pick up eggs last so that they stay cold.

Keep Eggs Cold

- Refrigerate eggs within two hours of purchase.
- Keep eggs in the coldest section of the refrigerator, usually near the back. Keeping them in the egg compartment in the door will not provide a consistent and cool enough temperature.
- Store eggs in their original carton. The carton helps protect eggs from odours and damage, and you will be able to easily check the best before date.
- Do not crack the shell of an egg until you want to use it. If a shell cracks by accident, remove the egg from the

shell, store it in a covered container in the fridge and use within four days. Hard-boiled eggs can be stored in the fridge in a covered container for up to one week.

- Egg salad sandwiches are a popular lunch food, but if you are sending a child to school with an egg salad sandwich in a lunch bag, be sure to include an icepack or frozen juice box to keep the sandwich cold.

Keep Clean

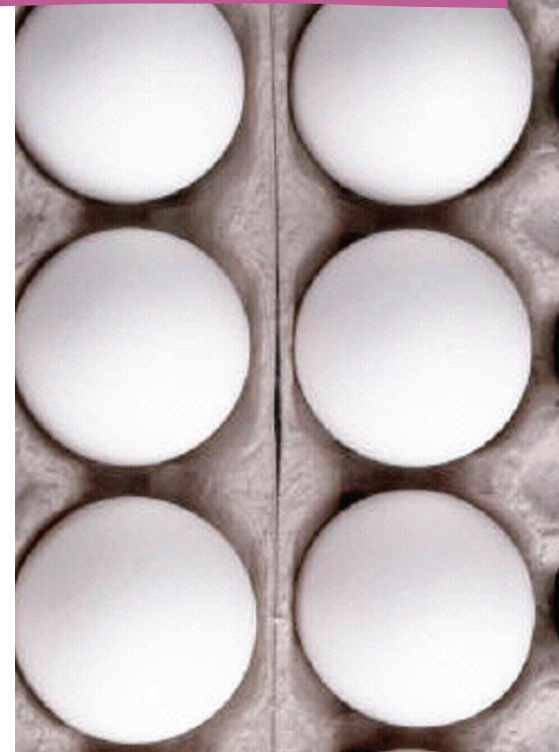
- Before and after you handle eggs, wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. Clean and sanitize all cutting boards, counters, knives and other utensils with a mild bleach solution.

Bleach Sanitizer

- Combine 5 mL (1 tsp) of bleach with 1 L (4 cups) of water in a labelled spray bottle.
- After cleaning, spray sanitizer on the surface/utensil and let stand briefly.
- Rinse with lots of clean water, and air dry (or use clean towels).

Cook Thoroughly

- When cooking eggs, make sure they are cooked to at least 63°C (145°F) for 15 seconds, and when cooking egg-based foods, make sure they are cooked thoroughly, to at least 74°C (165°F) for 15 seconds.



- Serve egg dishes immediately after cooking and refrigerate leftovers in containers within two hours.
- Eat leftover egg dishes within three to four days for best quality, or freeze for later use.
- Foods containing raw or lightly cooked eggs may be harmful to vulnerable people such as young children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with weak immune systems.
- Uncooked cookie dough and batters made with raw eggs could contain *Salmonella* and should not be tasted or eaten until they are cooked thoroughly.
- When making foods that do not get cooked and contain eggs (such as icing, eggnog or Caesar salad dressing), use pasteurized egg products i.e. liquid eggs instead of raw eggs.

Easter Eggs

- Decorated eggs that have been left out on display are not safe to eat.
- If you want to eat the eggs you decorate, hard boil them thoroughly and then cool them immediately in the refrigerator.
- Use a non-toxic colouring dye on eggs with un-cracked shells.
- Be sure that eggs are kept cold before and after dyeing, which means they should be out of the refrigerator for no more than two hours in total.
- Coloured eggs can be stored in a covered container in the refrigerator for up to one week.



How Long Should I Cook Eggs?

Many cooking methods can be used to cook eggs safely, including poaching, hard boiling, scrambling, frying and baking. However, eggs must be cooked thoroughly to prevent food-borne illnesses. Cook egg dishes according to the following guidelines for 15 seconds, then serve promptly:

Scrambled eggs, omelettes and frittatas (cook to 74°C/165°F)

Cook until the eggs are thickened and no visible liquid egg remains. Scrambled eggs should not be runny.

Fried eggs (cook to 63°C/145°F)

To cook both sides and increase the temperature the eggs reach, cook slowly and either baste the eggs, cover the pan with a lid or turn the eggs. Cook until the whites are completely set and the yolks begin to thicken but are not hard.

Poached eggs (cook to 63°C/145°F)

For classic poached eggs cooked gently in simmering water, cook until the whites are completely set and the yolks begin to thicken but are not hard, about 5 minutes. Avoid pre-cooking and reheating poached eggs.

French toast, crab or other fish cakes, quiches, stratas, baked custards, most casseroles (cook to 74°C/165°F)

Use a probe thermometer to help guard against uneven cooking due to hot spots and inadequate cooking due to varying oven temperatures.

Hard-boiled eggs (cook to 74°C/165°F)

Be aware that while Salmonella are destroyed when hard-boiled eggs are properly prepared, hard-boiled eggs can spoil more quickly than raw eggs. After cooking, cool hard-boiled eggs quickly under running cold water or in ice water. Avoid allowing eggs to stand in stagnant water. Refrigerate hard-boiled eggs in their shells promptly after cooling and use them within one week.

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Simcoe

P.O. Box 247, 12 Gilbertson Dr.
Simcoe, ON N3Y 4L1
519.426.6170

www.hnhu.org • environmentalhealth@hnhu.org

Caledonia

282 Argyle Street South
Caledonia, ON N3W 1K7
905.318.6623