

Wash Your Hands

This is one of the most important parts of safe food handling in the kitchen because our hands can hold on to so much dirt, grime and bacteria.

A simple 20 second hand-wash with soap and warm water then dry with paper-towel. This is all you need to do before cooking, after touching raw meats, eggs and other foods that should not be cross-contaminated with each other.

If in doubt wash your hands or wear gloves but even then you must change your gloves as you change what you are preparing.

When should you wash your hands?

- After going to the bathroom or helping others in the washroom
- Leaving the kitchen and touching surfaces
- Washing dishes
- Touching animals or anything related
- Cleaning
- Smoking
- Handling Cash or Coins
- Handling Garbage
- Sneezing, Coughing or Blowing your Nose
- Handling raw meats or products
- Touching anywhere on your body including your hair

Reusable Grocery Bags

Wash your reusable bags at least once a week because you don't know what is or was in there. If you carry raw meat or dairy that may have leaked you certainly don't want them lingering on the bag touching other products for your next grocery shop.

I simply take them to the basement and turn them inside out and wash thoroughly in the laundry sink with hot water, soap and a dash of vinegar. I [use lots of vinegar for cleaning](#) as do most people as vinegar has many positive uses.

Wash Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Wash your vegetables and fruits under cool-cold water before eating or preparing them. I know some people like to use a white-vinegar/water solution to also spray away and contaminants that may be present before refrigeration.

Using something simple as an [Oxy Good Grips Scrub Brush](#) for your fruits and vegetables that have a hard skin such as potatoes, yams and melons to make sure you remove any bacteria or dirt that is present on the outside before cooking.

Even if you plan to peel your fruits and vegetables always give them a wash because it removes any residue that may linger or spread as you peel.

Cutting Boards

We have 3 cutting boards that are plastic and coloured and one rectangle and round wood cutting board for **bread**s.

1. **meats, seafood and poultry**
2. **cheeses**
3. **fruits and vegetables**

It's very important to sanitize your cutting boards after every use with a simple solution of water, bleach and white vinegar along with hot water and soap. We do this to prevent illness as well we never use the cutting boards inter-changeably.

Cooking Raw Meat, Poultry and Seafood

Always cook your meat, poultry and chicken to safe internal temperatures to avoid foodborne illnesses. You can read all about Safe Cooking Temperatures if you are not sure what to test for.

You can buy a meat thermometer at just about any big box store including Walmart, Canadian Tire or order one online at Amazon.

We use the [Thermopro Digital Meat Probe](#) that we bought last year for our BBQ and Kitchen since I'm still learning my way around the grill and it's a great kitchen tool to have on hand. For \$25.99 you can't go wrong and it's high quality and worth the money.

Cleaning Kitchen Surfaces

Illness causing bacteria not only survives on your hands but on your utensils, food, cutting boards and on kitchen surfaces which is why it's a must to clean them daily and well.

Sanitize countertops, tables, taps, sinks and other appliances with sanitizing spray again a simple mixture as mentioned below in a spray bottle.

Washing Countertops

Our countertops are always clean when no one is cooking in the kitchen because Mrs. CBB makes sure of it. She cleans all surfaces in the kitchen daily and does a thorough clean once a week.

We keep a labelled spray bottle that I make with 1 tsp of bleach, 1 tbsp vinegar and the rest water which is about 2-3 cups.

We use this cleaning solution to keep our kitchen clean and sanitized so we don't have further risk of food borne illness.

Cloth vs. Paper Towel

In the kitchen we use both tea towels, dish cloths and paper towels which all serve a different purpose. At times we use baby wipes as well to clean up small messes. In any case if you do use cloths make sure to wash them often in hot water with a spot of bleach (whites) to kill any bacteria.

You don't want to keep using the same dish cloth in your kitchen for days. Mrs. CBB is of the type who uses it for a day and it's in the wash because she's picky about leaving anything on the cloth overnight or for days at a time.

Although paper-towel may not be environmental friendly there are many kinds of paper towel you can buy that are support the environment such as EnviroCare , Scott Paper Towel or Seventh Generation.

Plating Dishes

Never ever use the same plate that raw meat, poultry and fish have been on no matter what. Find something else because the risk of cross-contamination increases when you do this. No one wants to have a foodborne illness that can be avoided. Get a clean plate.

Eating Raw Foods

The choice is yours but try not to consume foods that contain raw eggs in them such as cookie dough, cake batter, raw eggs or egg whites. As tempting as it might be to lick the spoon from your cake batter or cookie bowl eating raw eggs is not safe and you risk salmonella infection. I may not happen or has happened but it could.

Microwave Defrosting

Any time you use your microwave to defrost food you must cook it straight after especially raw meats, poultry and seafood. Never leave defrosted foods in your microwave or anything that you have used the microwave for and then re-heat hours later.

Counter Defrosting

Almost everyone defrosts their meat, poultry and seafood on the counter or in the sink but beware as you may want to stick to the 2 hour time limit. After this you can refrigerate the item to finish the defrosting process or microwave THEN cook straight after.

Bottom Line- Kitchen Food Safety

It's important to be aware of kitchen food safety and the steps you must take to protect you and your family from becoming ill. The last thing you need is to be home in bed or in the hospital recovering and losing income that you need to pay your bills.

Prepared by:

www.canadianbudgetbinder.com