

Caregiver Assistance News

“Caring for You - Caring for Others”

Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

*Serving Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence,
Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton Counties in Ohio*

www.aaa7.org **Helping You Age Better!**



OCTOBER 2020

Hygiene and Food Safety

Foodborne illness (food poisoning) is fairly common—every year about 48 million people (one in six) in the U.S. become ill from eating contaminated foods. Of those, about 3,000 die. Older adults are at special risk because they can't efficiently fight off the bacteria, virus, and parasites that make people sick.

People often think their illness was caused by their last meal, but the time between eating bad food and the onset of illness can vary widely. Usually, you'll feel sick 1–3 days after eating. But you could become sick anytime from 20 minutes to three weeks after eating.

Know the symptoms of foodborne illness: upset stomach, abdominal pain, vomiting, or diarrhea are common. Or, the person in your care may have flu-like symptoms with a fever, headache and body aches. It's easy to confuse foodborne illness with other types of illness.



At Restaurants

Especially in this time of COVID-19, if you eat out, wipe your table, silverware, plate edges, and drinking glass with a disinfectant wipe and don't share food. Always order food well done. Doggie bags should be refrigerated within two hours; within one hour if air temperature is 90° F or above.

At Home

- Wash hands with soap before preparing, serving or eating food.
- Disinfect sink and kitchen counters with a solution of four teaspoons chlorine bleach per quart of water.
- Air drying dishes is more sanitary than using a dish towel.
- Check expiration dates carefully and discard food that's expired.
- Cook all meat, poultry, and fish thoroughly, to an oven temperature of at least 325° F. Cook hamburgers or chopped meat to an internal temperature of 160° F. (There is much less chance of being infected by a solid piece of meat because bacteria collects only on the outside.)
- Check temperature after reheating foods in the microwave oven, allow standing time. Then, use a clean food thermometer to check that food has reached 165° F.
- Keep hot foods at 140° F or more and cold foods at 50° F or colder.

Hygiene and Food Safety...continued from Page 1

- Keep refrigerator below 41° F.
- Cook eggs until the yolks are no longer runny; never serve raw eggs.
- Don't serve raw oysters, clams, or shellfish.
- Avoid unpasteurized milk and cider.
- Don't keep refrigerated leftovers more than 3–4 days. Even if the food looks and smells fine, it may not be safe.
- Thaw foods properly.
- Separate raw and ready-to-eat foods.

Source: National Institutes of Health; Centers for Disease Control;

Sanitize Sponges

All it takes is one minute on high in the microwave to kill bacteria on your kitchen sponges. Wet them first so they don't catch fire, and also check that it doesn't have a metallic scrub pad.

If yours does, put it in the dishwasher instead.



Handwashing: A Healthy Habit in the Kitchen

Handwashing is one of the most important things you can do to prevent food poisoning when you are preparing food. Washing your hands frequently with soap and water is an easy way to prevent germs from spreading around your kitchen and to other foods.

Washing hands is important even if you're wearing gloves. Be sure to wash your hands before and after using gloves to prevent the spread of germs. You can contaminate gloves with germs from your hands when you put on gloves. Contaminated gloves can spread germs to your hands when you remove the gloves. Handwashing is especially important during key times when germs can spread. Key times to wash hands in the kitchen:

- Before, during, and after preparing any food.
- After handling raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs.
- After touching garbage.
- After wiping counters or cleaning other surfaces with chemicals.
- After touching pets, pet food, or pet treats.
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.
- Before eating.

Follow Five Steps to Wash Your Hands the Right Way

Handwashing is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs, but it's important to follow these five steps every time:

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.



Source: CDC Campaign: Life Is Better With Clean Hands; FoodSafety.gov

Taking Care of Yourself

Stop Touching Your Face!

It's a quirk of human nature that we touch our eyes, noses and mouths (the T zone) all day long. Kids do it and adults do it—even gorillas, orangutans and chimpanzees do it. Researchers believe people may touch their faces to soothe themselves in times of stress. But it's also a major way we pick up infections from the common cold to COVID-19. Our eyes, nose and mouth are all entry points for COVID-19 and many other germs.



To stop the habit, try to be mindful of your hands. Do not cough and sneeze into your hands. If you cannot stop the habit, try wearing gloves. This will serve as a gentle reminder of where your hands are and what they are doing. Want to improve your chance of avoiding COVID-19? Stop touching your face!

Source: New York Times; HenrytheHand.com; livescience.com/why-hard-to-stop-touching-face

Memory Care - Making Decisions

It is important to keep in mind that the person in the early stage of Alzheimer's can continue to do many of the things they always have; however, one important ability that is often lost early is making decisions, even such seemingly simple ones as what to order in a restaurant.

Interested in a Telephone Support Group for Caregivers?

The Caregiver Support Program at the Area Agency on Aging District 7 is offering a free telephone support group for caregivers.

Upcoming Calls: November 19th and December 17 from 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm

If you are interested, please call Vicki Woyan for more details.

1-800-582-7277, extension 215 or you can e-mail info@aaa7.org.



Schedule Your FREE Fall Prevention Coaching Session

- Over the phone or virtually - your choice!
- Completely free!
- Individualized coaching specific to your questions and needs!
- Available now through December 4th.
- Call Hannah at 1-800-582-7277, extension 247 to schedule!





Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

PO Box 154 • 160 Dorsey Drive • Rio Grande, OH 45674-0154

Toll-Free Number: (800) 582-7277 • TTY: 711 (Relay Ohio)

Website: www.aaa7.org • E-Mail: info@aaa7.org • Facebook: www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7

Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. serves the following counties in Ohio: Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton. Services are rendered on a non-discriminatory basis. Those interested in learning more about the services provided through the Area Agency on Aging District 7 can call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277. Here, individuals can talk directly with a trained Resource Specialist who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs. The Agency can also be reached via e-mail at info@aaa7.org.

Safety Tips - Grocery Shopping in the Time of COVID-19

The safest way to shop is online delivery. You can pay ahead of time online and have the groceries delivered outside your door with no face-to-face contact. However, if you do go to the grocery store follow these tips:

- Take a disinfectant wipe with you each time you go out. This will remind you not to touch your face and will enable you to avoid touching surfaces, like door handles, that might contain COVID-19.
- When you get home, before touching anything in your house, wash your hands. Then use disinfectant wipes to wipe down your keys, phone, phone case, and door handles. Periodically, disinfect your computer keyboard, faucet handles, light switches, and countertops.
- When bringing home take-out food, wipe down all containers. Consider avoiding foods that aren't cooked (like salads and uncooked vegetables). Wipe down all grocery items.



*Some content in this publication is excerpted from *The Comfort of Home: Caregivers Series*. It is for informational use and not health advice. It is not meant to replace medical care but to supplement it. The publisher assumes no liability with respect to the accuracy, completeness or application of information presented or the reader's misunderstanding of the text.*