

DIGESTIVE HEALTH - AT HOME AND AWAY

While holidays and vacations can be renewing, uplifting and energizing – they can become stressful and taxing to those who are faced with health challenges. Food poisoning can pose a danger, especially for those with compromised digestion and immunity. Even if you follow all of the safety precautions suggested below, your best bet for avoiding the serious consequences of food poisoning is to make sure that your gastrointestinal tract is well populated with friendly bacteria. [Probiotics](#) (friendly bacteria) are a potent and powerful defense against invading bacteria.

For additional tips on healthful food choices while away from home, also click on the following link from the WholeApproach Diet pages: [Adjusting to Your Dietary Changes.](#)

There are steps you can take, both at home and away from home, to protect yourself from becoming a victim of food poisoning:

- Always wash your hands before handling food.
- Whenever possible, purchase organically raised, antibiotic-free meat and poultry. Animals raised on factory farms are not only continually fed antibiotics, they are raised in crowded, unsanitary environments that encourage bacterial contamination.
- When you bring raw meat, poultry, or fish home from the supermarket, refrigerate it immediately (or freeze it for long-term storage). This will slow down bacterial growth.
- Defrost frozen meat, chicken, and fish in the refrigerator, not on kitchen countertops. Defrosting at room temperature encourages bacterial growth.
- Never place cooked chicken, burgers, steaks, etc. on the same unwashed plate that held them raw. Always thoroughly wash the plate with hot soapy water first.
- When cutting raw chicken or turkey, never use the same knife or cutting board to also cut up vegetables or other foods without scrupulously disinfecting them first. (FOOD CONTAMINATION-AVOIDANCE: Using a spray bottle, dilute 50 drops of [ProSeed Liquid Concentrate](#) into 16 ounces of water. Spray on cutting board. Let stand 10 minutes then wipe with damp cloth. NOTE: Bacteria transferred to cutting boards from beef, chicken, fish, etc, constitute a major health hazard, especially to children and immune-compromised individuals.)
- After any contact with raw meat, poultry, or fish, always thoroughly disinfect your hands, kitchen countertops, cutting boards, and utensils with hot water and antibacterial soap immediately (see above tips for disinfecting).
- Don't use the sauce in which raw chicken, meat, or fish has been marinating (unless it has been brought to a rolling boil for at least 1 minute.)



- Cook meat, poultry, and fish thoroughly and eat it as soon after cooking as possible. The center of any cooked meat must reach 165°F in order to kill bacteria. When cooking a roast, use a food thermometer to make sure the interior portion of the meat reaches this temperature. Burgers, steaks, chicken, and chops should be cooked until they are well done and no pink remains.
- Never allow any cooked food to stand out any longer than it takes to serve and eat it. Refrigerate leftovers as soon as possible.
- Keep the temperature of your refrigerator at 40°F or lower. Set your freezer to 0°F or lower.
- Don't use raw eggs that are cracked. They may contain a double-dose of antibiotic-resistant Salmonella or worse. When cooking eggs, aim for well-done. Boil eggs for seven minutes, poach for at least five minutes. When frying eggs, it takes three minutes on each side before bacteria are destroyed. Always eat "dry" scrambled eggs.
- Wash produce thoroughly. Fruits, especially berries, and salad greens, such as leafy lettuces and spinach, often harbor contaminants. Never eat such foods until they are washed well.
- Be suspicious of products in damaged or bulging cans, cracked jars, or containers with loose lids. The contents of such items may be contaminated with Botulinum, the most dangerous of all foodborne bacteria. Throw them away. That tell-tale bulging can is the result of bacteria-produced gas and is letting you know that harmful bacteria are at work inside.
- If a just-opened can or jar of food is obviously moldy or smells wrong, throw it away; be suspicious of bubbles or foaminess. In all cases of suspected bacterial contamination, be sure to dispose of the food and container safely.
- Stay away from foods, (especially those made with mayonnaise, salad dressing, and milk products), that have been un-refrigerated for more than an hour or two. Be especially leery of such items at picnics or potluck meals.
- When eating at salad bars, avoid those that don't look clean or those that are not covered by protective glass. Do not choose items such as chicken and fish, or foods containing mayonnaise.
- Even if you follow all of the safety precautions suggested above, your best bet for avoiding the serious consequences of food poisoning is to make sure the [friendly bacteria](#) are well represented in your gastrointestinal tract. Although laboratory-created antibiotics are no longer as effective as they once were, the powerful natural antibiotic weapons wielded by the friendly bacteria are as potent and powerful as always against invading bacteria.

TIPS FOR TRAVELERS

To minimize your risk of picking up unfriendly bacteria when traveling out of your local environment, follow these simple rules:

- Drink only bottled water. When dining out, order bottled mineral water (sparkling or still). Never drink local or city water from the tap. If you order coffee or tea, ask if they use filtered or bottled water.
- Eat only fruit that you can peel (and personally peel it yourself).
- Eat only cooked foods.
- Eat only meats that have been cooked to the well-done stage.
- Don't eat anything from street vendors.
- Pack foods from home whenever possible.
- When making hotel reservations, ask for a refrigerator in your room so that you can keep your probiotics and snacks.

Raw vegetable and fruit salads can contain bacteria and pesticides, consider avoiding them when traveling (unless you know the cook!). Even if the salad greens are washed, if dirty fingers tear the lettuce, there's an excellent chance that the salad is contaminated with bacteria.

Also read the "[Adjusting to Dietary Changes](#)" for some tips on Eating Out. Available on our [Newsletter](#) page: [Tips for Better Digestion](#) , [More Tips for Better Digestion](#) and [What you need to know about Probiotics](#).

To make sure your trip isn't ruined by food poisoning that can cause an upset stomach, diarrhea, nausea, or worse, always travel with [Probiotics](#) and [Digestive Enzymes](#). Before, during and after your vacation, take your Probiotics daily to keep your friendly bacterial forces up to strength.

If you suffer any signs of food poisoning, remember, food poisoning affects the stomach before it attacks your intestines. Empty several capsules of Probioplus in a few ounces of bottled water. Slowly sipping diluted Probiotics through a straw will help keep your stomach from rejecting the treatment. Always remember to consult a practitioner if symptoms become acute.