



COVID-19: Food Safety at Home Guidance

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Is the U.S. food supply safe?

Currently there is no evidence of food or food packaging being associated with transmission of COVID-19.

Unlike foodborne gastrointestinal (GI) viruses like norovirus and hepatitis A that often make people ill through contaminated food, SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19, is a virus that causes respiratory illness. Foodborne exposure to this virus is not known to be a route of transmission.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person. This includes between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet), and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. However, it's always critical to follow the 4 key steps of food safety—clean, separate, cook, and chill – to prevent foodborne illness.

Source: <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

Food Safety Concerns

While practicing home food safety and good personal hygiene are always important, handwashing is especially critical in reducing the spread of COVID-19 and should be done often. Before preparing or eating food, it's important to wash your hands with clean water and soap for a minimum of 20 seconds. You should also wash your hands after being out in public, touching your face, coughing, sneezing, blowing your nose, or using the bathroom. If handwashing is not an option, hand sanitizer with at least 60-percent alcohol may be used until soap and water become available. Other practices, such as cleaning and disinfecting countertops and other surfaces can also serve as protection to you and others.

Although questions have been raised regarding the transmission of COVID-19, there is currently no evidence to suggest that it can be transmitted through food or water systems, but sharing food and beverages is discouraged. Proper home food safety is advised, including promptly refrigerating foods, keeping raw and cooked foods separate, and heating food to the appropriate internal temperature.

Source: <https://www.eatright.org/coronavirus>

Access to Food

During this public health emergency, government agencies have developed flexibilities to help individuals who use programs such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has also developed plans for children who participate in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs so that they are able to have continued access to food during prolonged school closures.

Older adults and other individuals who are considered at increased risk for complications from COVID-19 should evaluate the foods they have at home. If you are at high-risk or are unable to get the items you need, consider contacting family or friends to assist. Meal delivery and grocery delivery services may be available as an alternative option, and many businesses are offering additional precautions to help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Source: <https://www.eatright.org/coronavirus>

Supplements and Claims for Cures

Currently, there are no known cures for COVID-19, though research is underway to develop a vaccine. In its continuing efforts to protect consumers, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has been monitoring and warning companies that offer fraudulent products which claim to help prevent, diagnose, treat or cure COVID-19. Untested supplements and other products that are not regulated by the FDA may be dangerous and potentially life threatening. The U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and FDA have jointly issued warning letters to sellers of unapproved and misbranded products claiming they can treat or prevent the virus. Learn more here.

Source: <https://www.eatright.org/coronavirus>

OHA has comprehensive information on their website including fact sheets and information about the number of persons under monitoring or investigation. You may also [sign-up for regular email updates](#) to keep informed of the latest developments in Oregon.

Please visit the Marion County [Health and Human Services website](#) for additional information and links to both OHA and the CDC. For general information about the novel coronavirus, please call 2-1-1.