



## Barry-Eaton District Health Department

Be Active • Be Safe • Be Healthy

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**November 15, 2017**

### **Keep Yourself and Your Family Healthy This Holiday Season!**

With the holidays approaching, many people look forward to holiday parties and dinners. Unfortunately, these gatherings can also have uninvited guests—germs that can cause food poisoning!

Keeping hands clean through improved hand hygiene is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Many diseases and conditions are spread by not washing hands with soap and clean, running water. How should you wash your hands? Follow these steps:

- Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- Lather the soap in your hands by rubbing them together, making sure to rub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds (how long it takes to sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice).
- Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

Also, many people will prepare food for and bring food to meals and celebrations. It is important to protect yourself and your family from food poisoning. Follow these four easy steps to keep food safe:

- **Cook: Cook to the right temperature**
  - Use a food thermometer to make sure your food is heated high enough to kill bacteria. Cook poultry, stuffed meats, and casseroles to 165°F; hamburgers and bratwursts to 155°F; and pork, fish, and raw shelled eggs to 145°F.
  - Keep food hot after cooking (at 135°F or above).
  - Reheat cooked foods to 165°F or higher.
- **Clean: Wash hands and surfaces often**
  - Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and running water before, during, and after preparing food.
  - Wash surfaces and utensils after each use.
  - Wash fruits and vegetables, but not meat, poultry, or eggs.
- **Chill: Refrigerate promptly**
  - Refrigerate perishable foods within two hours.
  - Never thaw or marinate foods on the counter.
  - Know when to throw foods out (visit [www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/storagetimes.html](http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/storagetimes.html)).
- **Separate: Don't cross-contaminate**
  - Use separate cutting boards and plates for produce and for meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs.
  - Separate meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs from other foods in your grocery bags and in the refrigerator.

Signs of food poisoning can include upset stomach, abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, and dehydration. These can be mild to severe and may differ depending on the germ that is making you sick. If you

think you may have food poisoning, call your health care provider. If at all possible, do not prepare food for others within 24 hours of being sick with vomiting and/or diarrhea. If you suspect food poisoning from eating at a food service establishment or a large gathering, please contact the Barry-Eaton District Health Department at (269) 945-9516 in Barry County or (517) 543-2430 in Eaton County.

For more information on handwashing, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/>. For food safety information, visit [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov).