


Facts from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration
Getting Eggs-pert Advice On Egg Safety

(NAPSA)—Anyway you look at it including eggs in your diet makes eggs-tremely good food sense—if you follow a few safety pointers.

Eggs are a good source of protein and can be a healthy and economical contribution to a well-balanced diet. To ensure egg safety, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration requires that as of September 4, 2001, all cartons of shell eggs not treated to destroy salmonella must carry instructions about how to prevent illness with proper handling:

Safe Handling Instructions:
To prevent illness from bacteria, keep eggs refrigerated, cook eggs until yolks are firm and cook foods containing eggs thoroughly. 

Raw or undercooked eggs may be contaminated with salmonella bacteria. This disease can be especially harmful to children, the elderly, and people whose immune systems have been weakened by illness.

Proper handling starts at the store. Only buy eggs that are sold in a refrigerated case and keep eggs refrigerated until you are ready to cook them. The FDA requires that all untreated shell eggs sold in a store must be stored and displayed at 45° F (7° C) or lower. Open the carton to be sure eggshells are not cracked and the eggs are clean.

When cooking with eggs, wash hands, utensils, equipment and work areas in hot, soapy water before and after they come in contact with eggs and egg-containing foods.

Be sure to cook eggs thoroughly. Cook eggs until both the yolk and white are firm.

“No sunny side up, no over easy. This is a case when it’s better to be safe than sorry,” said Joseph Levitt, Director of FDA’s Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition.

Scrambled eggs should not be runny. Casseroles and other dishes containing eggs should be cooked to 160° F. Serve cooked eggs and egg-containing foods



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immediately after cooking.

Store eggs in their original carton and refrigerate as soon as possible after you buy them. Use raw eggs within three weeks. Cooked eggs should not sit out for more than two hours. Refrigerate leftover cooked egg dishes up to 3-4 days.

When refrigerating a large amount of leftovers containing hot eggs, divide them into several shallow containers so it will cool quickly. Eggs can be frozen for up to a year, but the whites and yolks should be beaten together before freezing.

The new handling instructions are part of an Egg Safety Action Plan, a farm-to-table approach for ensuring the safety of the nation’s egg supply.

For more information on handling eggs and other food safety, call the FDA at 1-888-SAFEFOOD or visit the Web site at www.cfsan.fda.gov.