

# Safe Food Handling

Proper handling and cooking of chicken and other poultry provides protection against viruses such as Salmonella, E. coli, and potentially, avian influenza ("bird") virus. Although there is no evidence of the "H5N1" avian flu virus is in the U.S. you should take appropriate precautions to protect you and your family from eating contaminated poultry.

Additionally, a flood, blizzard or public health disaster could jeopardize the safety of the food in your home. To protect you and your family from foodborne illness practice these three behaviors — hand washing, cooking meats and eggs thoroughly and cleaning and sanitizing your cooking area.

Saint Paul-Ramsey County Public Health encourages the following guidelines in each of these areas.

## Hand Washing

- Wet your hands with warm running water, apply soap, clean fingernails, and rub hands together for at least 20 seconds.
- Rinse hands well under running water.
- Dry hands using a paper towel or air dryer.

## Cooking Food

- Have a food thermometer on hand. Verify that meats have been cooked to the recommended minimum internal temperature on the packaging, or at least 165 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Cook eggs until the whites and yolks are solid. Avoid eating raw or lightly cooked eggs in such foods as raw cookie dough, homemade mayonnaise, and dressings made with raw eggs.



Prepare.

Practice.

Participate.

## **Cleaning and Sanitizing**

- First, clean all surfaces in the kitchen with hot soapy water.
- Then, sanitize with a disinfectant such bleach, ammonia or rubbing alcohol. (Never mix those disinfectants together.) Sanitizing is the only way to remove germs from a surface. Use 1 teaspoon of chlorine bleach in 1 quart of water.



**Saint Paul – Ramsey County  
Department of Public Health**

[www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ph](http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ph)

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