



T17: Safe Preparation of Food

Why is the Tool Helpful to You

Knowing any special precautions to take during the COVID-19 pandemic helps keep our household safe.

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What You Need

Your household needs little more additional equipment and precautions to safely prepare food at home during the pandemic.

- Hard surface cleaner / disinfectant and clean cloths or paper towels for disinfecting food preparation areas
- Face mask (see T3i)
- Soap and water for frequent hand washing
- Knowledge of food safety guidelines, particularly with respect to thorough cooking of food, chilling food, cleaning and hand washing and the risks of cross-contamination between cooked and uncooked food

Source: [FDA](#), [Food Standards Scotland](#), [USDA](#)



What you Need to do

There is currently no evidence that food is a source of COVID-19 and it is very unlikely that it can be transmitted through eating food.

Source: [European Food Safety Authority](#)

Apply strict hygiene rules that you normally use to protect your household from food poisoning

The virus is mainly spread through person-to-person via tiny water droplets expelled during coughing, sneezing and breathing out. However, it is possible for COVID-19 to be spread indirectly when someone touches a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touches their mouth or nose, but thorough and frequent hand washing will further reduce any risk of spreading COVID-19 indirectly through contact with potentially contaminated surfaces.

Washing Hands



Cleaning Surfaces



- Wash your hands with warm water and soap before you start preparing or cooking food, as well as after having prepared food.
- Store your food properly (any contact between the food consumed raw and cooked food must be avoided), discard outer packaging before storage (for example cardboard outer-packaging where there is an inner plastic package) while keeping track of key information such as maximum duration limits (e.g. best before dates).
- Systematically wash fruits and vegetables with clean water, especially if they are not going to be cooked (COVID-19 will not survive cooking).
- Avoid contamination by kitchenware (knives, plates, etc.) by carefully washing them with detergent in between using them for different food ingredients.
- Respect cooking instructions (time, temperature) for food intended to be eaten cooked.



- Fridge and kitchen surfaces should be cleaned routinely, though with increased frequency.

Source: [European Commission](#) (COVID-19 and food safety)

Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms should avoid handling food

If you do not live alone, it is a sensible precaution to avoid preparing and handling food for others if you have COVID-19 symptoms. Whilst COVID-19 is not known to be transmitted through food, it is always good practice not to handle food whilst coughing and sneezing and to avoid touching your face during the preparation of meals. Tongs and utensils can be used to minimize contact with food and thorough, frequent hand washing is critical in preventing the spread of any bacterial and viral infections.

Source: [Food Standards Scotland](#)

Face masks

If you are cooking for others and believe you have recently come into contact with someone who may have COVID-19, you may consider using a face mask as part of a good hygiene practice.

Source: [European Commission](#) (COVID-19 and food safety)