



Kane County Health Department Advises Be ‘Eggs-tra’ Careful This Easter

April 13, 2022 - The Kane County Health Department wants you to enjoy the April 17 Easter holiday, and one of the ways to protect your family is by avoiding potential food poisoning from contaminated Easter eggs. Eggs are perishable and need to be handled properly to prevent foodborne illness. Occasionally, clean and uncracked shells can be contaminated with bacteria, specifically *Salmonella* Enteritidis. Follow these tips so every bunny can have a safe holiday:

Easter Egg Know-How

- Wash hands with soap and water before handling raw eggs, meat, poultry, and seafood.
- Only use refrigerated eggs. Discard eggs that are cracked or dirty.
- When cooking, place a single layer of eggs in a saucepan. Add water to at least one inch above the eggs. Cover the pan, bring the water to a boil, then carefully remove from the heat. Let the eggs stand (18 minutes for extra-large eggs, 15 minutes for large, 12 minutes for medium). Cook eggs and dishes containing eggs until the internal temperature reaches 160 degrees F on a food thermometer. Immediately run cold water over the eggs. When the eggs are cool enough to handle, place them in an uncovered container in the refrigerator where they can air-dry.
- When decorating, be sure to use food-grade dyes. It is safe to use commercial egg dyes, liquid food coloring, and fruit-drink powders. When handling eggs, be careful not to crack them; otherwise, bacteria could enter the egg through the cracks in the shell.
- Keep hard-cooked Easter eggs chilled on a shelf inside the refrigerator, not in the refrigerator door.
- For egg hunts and other activities, only use refrigerated eggs. Discard eggs that are cracked, dirty, or have been out at room temperature for more than 2 hours. Hide the eggs in places protected from dirt, fertilizer, pets and other potential sources of bacteria.
- Remember the two-hour rule, and make sure the “found” eggs are back in the refrigerator or consumed within two hours.
- Remember that hard-boiled eggs are only safe to eat for one week after cooking.

For more resources on Easter egg safety, visit <https://www.fightbac.org/egg-stra-care-for-spring-celebrations>. More food safety tips are available at [KaneHealth.com/Pages/Food-Safety.aspx](https://www.kanehealth.com/Pages/Food-Safety.aspx).

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