

Food safety—Salmonella

Egg safety for the consumer

Recent foodborne illness outbreaks have been associated with foods that have been prepared using raw and lightly cooked eggs and egg products. Examples of foods that contain raw or lightly cooked egg include mayonnaise, aioli, scrambled eggs, custard, cheesecake, eggnog, deep fried ice-cream and mousse.



Never use cracked or dirty eggs in the preparation of food. Dirty eggs may have harmful *Salmonella* bacteria on the shell. Cracked eggs allow *Salmonella* to enter and grow inside the egg. However even eggs with clean, uncracked shells can pose a risk if handled incorrectly.

Cross contamination can also occur when handling eggs and equipment and benches should be cleaned and sanitised to avoid contamination of ready-to-eat foods.

Raise
awareness of
Salmonella



Salmonella

Salmonella is the most commonly reported bacteria responsible for foodborne illness outbreaks and is usually associated with eggs and egg products. *Salmonella* infection causes gastroenteritis (commonly known as 'gastro') and symptoms can include headache, fever, stomach cramps, diarrhoea, nausea and vomiting which can last days or weeks.

Anyone can be affected by *Salmonella*, but certain people are at greater risk of severe illness including pregnant women, young children (under 5 years), older adults (over 60 years) and people with weakened immune systems.

Egg safety

DO NOT wash eggs

Washing eggs allows bacteria to move from the outside of the shell to inside the egg. Never wash eggs and throw away all dirty eggs.

Storage of eggs

When storing eggs:

- eggs and egg products should be stored under refrigeration, to minimise the growth of harmful *Salmonella* bacteria
- store eggs in their original carton in the fridge and do not use eggs that are out of date
- when transporting foods that contain raw egg, pack in an insulated cooler with enough ice, frozen blocks or a frozen juice box to keep them cold
- don't put the insulated cooler in the car boot—carry it inside an air-conditioned vehicle.

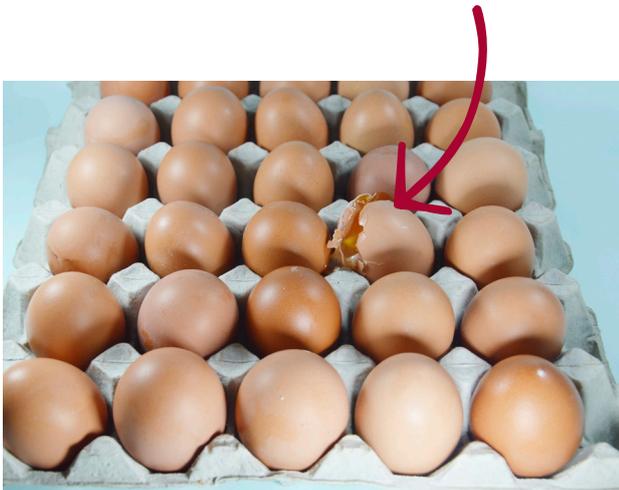


Remember

It is important never to leave foods that contain raw egg out of the fridge for any longer than four hours in total. If not consumed within a day, throw it out.

Minimising the risks of food containing raw egg

- open the carton and check the eggs look clean and are not cracked before purchasing
- only make food that contains raw egg products on the day you plan to eat it
- keep prepared eggs refrigerated until you are ready to use them
- never leave foods that contain raw egg out of the fridge for any longer than four hours in total
- if the food is not consumed within a day, throw it out
- to avoid cross contamination, cartons that contain cracked eggs should be discarded and not reused.



Remember

Hands should be washed and dried before and after handling eggs.



Cross contamination

Avoid contaminating other foods by using separate utensils and equipment for different types of food.

Cutting boards, utensils and equipment should be thoroughly washed with hot, soapy water each time they are used.

Handling of eggs

The following precautions should be taken when handling eggs:

- wash hands before and after handling eggs
- keep eggs and egg products refrigerated until required
- ensure utensils, equipment and other food contact surfaces such as benches are appropriately cleaned and sanitised after handling eggs and egg products
- use separate containers for each batch of food containing an egg product.

Ensure
high hygiene
standards



Separating eggs

To minimise cross contamination egg shells should not be used to separate the egg white from the egg yolk as *Salmonella* bacteria on the surface of the shell can be transferred to the contents of the egg.

Separating eggs using bare hands is also a risk as hands may become contaminated with *Salmonella* bacteria resulting in cross contamination. Use a clean egg separator so that if *Salmonella* bacteria are present on the shell, it won't contaminate the egg yolk or egg white.



Information

Queensland Health—Health Conditions Directory: conditions.health.qld.gov.au

For health advice:

- contact your local doctor or nearest public health clinic
- call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)

www.health.qld.gov.au

