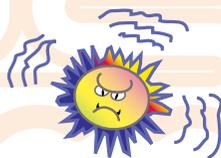




Practise Food Hygiene to Prevent Food-borne Diseases



Food-borne diseases such as hepatitis A, cholera, dysentery, typhoid and food poisoning are transmitted through ingestion of food and water contaminated by bacteria, viruses, protozoa, chemicals, or consumption of food that contains toxins. The best way to prevent these diseases is to observe good hygiene practices at all stages of food preparation. We should pay attention to the following aspects: -



1. Personal Hygiene



- Keep hands clean. Wash hands with liquid soap and water before handling food, after handling raw food and after using the toilet.
- Wear clean washable outfit at work.
- In case of sore throat or gastro-intestinal disturbances such as vomiting and diarrhoea, do not handle or cook food.
- Cover cuts and septic sores properly with waterproof plasters to prevent bacteria of the wound from getting onto food.
- Cough or sneeze away from food. Do not smoke in the kitchen.
- Deploy separate staff to handle cash and foods such as siu mei, lo mei, marine products and poultry.
- Employers should arrange all food handlers to attend training courses on food hygiene.



2. Environmental and Utensil Hygiene



- Unhygienic environment attracts rats and insects and leads to contamination of food. Always keep the inside and outside of the premises clean. Particular attention should be paid to the kitchen and toilet.
- Put refuse and food residue in a dustbin which should be covered properly at all times. Remove the contents at least once a day.
- Keep cleansed crockery in a dust-proof and insect-proof cupboard.





- Discard all chipped and cracked crockery.
- Always wash the chopping board thoroughly with water and detergent after use.



3. Food Hygiene

Purchase of Food

- Do not patronise illegal hawkers. Food business operators should use raw materials from reliable sources for food production.
- Pay attention to the conditions of food. Do not buy exposed food and food that looks, smells or tastes abnormal.



- Read and follow the storage methods, and pay attention to the “**use by**” or “**best before**” date stated on food labels when buying pre-packaged food.

- When buying live fish and shellfish, check if the container and water used to keep the seafood are clean. Buy only seafoods that are fresh and free from abnormal odour.



Storage of Food

- Keep raw meat, seafood and other perishable food items in the refrigerator (at 4°C or below).
- Do not use sea water from questionable source to keep seafood. Filter and change the water in fish tanks frequently. Cleanse fish tanks frequently.
- Keep raw and cooked food separately. Place cooked food in the upper compartment of refrigerator so as to prevent it from being contaminated by the drippings of raw food.
- Store cooked food at 4°C or below or above 60°C if not consuming the food immediately because bacteria grow and reproduce rapidly within the dangerous temperature zone of 4°C to 60°C.





Handling and Cooking of Food

- Prepare food only upon order. Avoid preparing food too far in advance, especially cold dishes, which include assorted siu mei and marine products such as jellyfish and mini-octopus.
- Wash all food thoroughly before cooking.

- Remove the viscera of shellfish as they are unhygienic.
- Handle raw and cooked food with separate utensils.
- Thaw frozen food under refrigeration. Cut chunky meat into small pieces beforehand to ensure thorough cooking.
- Ensure thorough cooking of food and reheating of leftovers before consumption. For instance, ground beef and hamburger should be cooked thoroughly to 70°C or above for 2 minutes to kill *Escherichia coli* O157:H7. Shellfish should be cooked at 100°C until their shells open. Once open, boil for an additional 3-5 minutes. For shucked oysters, cooked at 100°C for at least 3 minutes. Water should be boiled before consumption.



- Designate a separate portion for handling siu mei and lo mei and locate the portion away from fish tank and fish/poultry preparation area to prevent cross-contamination. Avoid conveying raw food items through this portion.



Sale and Consumption

- Provide insect-proof and dust-proof showcase for siu mei and lo mei. Avoid displaying them with marine products and raw food.
- Consume hot food as soon as it is done. Keep cold dishes in the refrigerator until consumption to prevent rapid growth of bacteria.



***If you follow the above guidelines,
everyone will enjoy safe food.***

Enquiry: Please call the Communication Resource Unit of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department on 2381 6096 or the 24-hour hotline 2868 0000.
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