

Extension Forum

By MRS. M.B. TAYLOR
Home Economics
Extension Agent
FOOD SAFETY AND
STORAGE

Poor food-handling practices in the home often cause illness in the family, even though the foods were safe to eat when purchased or first prepared.

From the moment food is harvested, caught or slaughtered it undergoes progressive deterioration. Depending upon the food this deterioration may be very slow or it may be so rapid as to render the food virtually useless in a matter of hours. Heat and cold, light, oxygen, moisture, dryness, the natural food enzymes themselves, and time all tend to deteriorate foods. At temperatures above 70 degrees F food can become worthless in a matter of hours.

Microorganisms capable of spoiling food are found everywhere. A most important point, however, is that microorganisms generally are not found within healthy living tissue. But they are always present to invade the flesh of plants or animals through a break in the skin or if the skin is weakened by disease or death.

Bacteria, yeasts and molds like warm, moist conditions. Most bacteria multiply best at temperatures between 60 degrees and 100 degrees F. Some will grow at temperatures down to the freezing point or water. Others will grow at temperatures as high as 100 degrees F. The spores of many bacteria will survive prolonged exposure to boiling water and then multiply when the temperature is lowered. To insure sterility, that is total destruction of microorganisms, the temperature must go to about 250 degrees F and maintain this temperature for 15 minutes or longer. Some bacteria and all molds

require oxygen for growth, other bacteria will not grow unless all free oxygen is absent. Most important is the tremendous rate at which bacteria and other microorganisms can multiply.

There are two principles underlying the control of deterioration when foods are to be kept only for a short time. (1) Keep animal products alive and delay harvesting as long as possible. (2) If the food must be killed, then clean it, cover it and cool it. This will only delay deterioration factors for a short time, for hours or perhaps at the most for a few days. For longer term practical preservation, as required for most of our food supply, further precautions are necessary.

Refrigerator and freezer temperatures are important for safe storage of food. Refrigerators should maintain a temperature of 33 degrees-40 degrees F for safe storage. Freezer temperature should be 0 degrees F or below. Remember to use covered containers in the refrigerator and clean, moisture-vapor resistant wrappings and containers for the freezer.

Some general pointers for preparing and cooking foods are:

—Serve food soon after cooking — or refrigerate promptly. Hot foods may be refrigerated if they do not raise the temperature of the refrigerator above 45 degrees F. Keep them in the refrigerator until served or reheated.

Speed the cooling of large quantities of food by refrigerating in shallow containers.

—Keep hot foods HOT (above 140 degrees F) and cold foods COLD (below 40 degrees F). Food may not be safe to eat if held more than 3 or 4 hours at temperatures between 60 degrees and 120 degrees F, the zone where bacteria grow rapidly. Remember

that time includes all time during preparation, storage and serving.

—Holding of food for several hours in an automatic oven prior to cooking is not safe if the food is in the temperature zone of 60 degrees to 120 degrees F for more than 3 or 4 hours.

—Thoroughly clean all dishes, utensils, and work surfaces with soap and water after each use. Bacteria can be destroyed by rinsing utensils and work surfaces with chlorine laundry bleach in proportion recommended on the package. Cutting boards, meat grinders, blenders and can openers particularly need this protection.

—Cracked or soiled eggs may contain harmful bacteria. They should be used only in foods that are to be thoroughly cooked, such as baked goods or foods cooked for a long time on the top of the range. Use only clean eggs with sound shells in any recipe in which eggs are not thoroughly cooked such as meringues, soft custards, puddings cooked on top of the range, poached, scrambled, soft-cooked eggs, omelets, egg-milk drinks and uncooked salad dressings.

—Quickly cook hot foods containing high proportion of eggs if they are not to be served hot. Then refrigerate until time to serve.

—Thaw frozen raw meat or unstuffed raw poultry in the refrigerator, or for a quicker method, immerse the package in its watertight wrapper in cold water. Thaw until meat is pliable. To cook frozen meat, poultry or fish, you must all at least one and one half times as long to cook to be sure the center of the meat is properly cooked. To conserve fuel, thaw raw meat, poultry, and fish before cooking.

—Heat leftovers thoroughly. Boil broth and gravies several minutes when reheating them.

By VIRGINIA WHITE
TRANSEAU
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT
15 OVER LAST YEAR:
Another school year began in Perquimans on Wednesday, with the schools all over the county opened. At the Perquimans High School, the largest gathering of children in the county, the opening exercises, under the direction of Supt. F.T. Johnson, were simple and interesting. There was an enrollment of 335 on Wednesday, the best enrollment for some years, an increase of 15 over last year.

W. T. MILLER HONORED BY BIRTHDAY PARTY: W.T. Miller, Parksville Township farmer, was honored at a delightful birthday dinner on Sunday, the occasion being his seventy-sixth birthday anniversary. Those present included Mrs. Sallie Turnage and her daughter, Ruth, of Chocowinity; Mr. and Mrs. W.J. Stanton, Mr. and Mrs. Wayland Howell and their daughter, Eleanor Faye; Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Stanton, Jesse Stanton, Misses Audrey and Marie

Stanton, Miss Ruth Hurdle, Mr. and Mrs. Johnnie Bundy and their two children, all of this County, and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Harrell, of Edenton.

WHITEHAT CLUB FORMED TUESDAY: The White Hat Home Demonstration Club was organized Tuesday afternoon by Miss Gladys Hamrick, Agent, who was very pleased with the initial meeting. Mrs. Mattie Barcliff was elected president of the new club, which is the thirteenth club to be organized since Miss Hamrick began her work in the county a year ago. Mrs. Thomas Eure is vice president, and Miss Hazel Ainsley is secretary of the new club. The members are Mesdames Freeman

Umphlett, Watson Eure, Harrell Miller, Freeman Harrell, Fenton Eure, Edward Benton, Ben Corbitt, Herman Caddy, Thomas Eure, A. M. Riddick, J.P. White, Mattie Barcliff, E.D. Matthews, V.A. Caddy, Earl Russell, Raymond Eure, Edward Miller, Hazel Hoskins, Delwin Eure, and Miss Hazel Ainsley. The next meeting will be held at the White Hat School.

"FOODFORTHUGHT": Next to person who knows how to run a newspaper probably are those who are

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sure they could write a book if they had time. — So live that you can get sick and be delirious without later worrying over what you said. More fillers include: It is presumed that picnic ants never heard of the law of supply and demand. Famous last words: "I believe that's his left front headlight burning". "It is

pleasant to think of the Garden of Eden, without taxes, reforms, working hours or relatives."

SEEN IN WANT ADS OF A FRIDAY, JUNE 1, 1928 COPY OF HERTFORD HERALD: PURSE LOST - Lost May 30 one long black purse badly worn containing one check for one dollar signed by Mrs. Ellie White

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RICHMOND GUEST
Mrs. Bob Clark of Richmond, Va. was a week-end guest of her sister-in-law, Mrs. Jack Stafford.

IN RALEIGH
Mrs. T.B. Sumner is visiting her son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. T.B. Sumner, Jr., in Raleigh.

WEEK-END IN PINEHURST
Mr. and Mrs. J.T. Biggers spent the week-end in Pinehurst with Miss Helen Cole.

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Claim Number Necessary

People covered by Medicare medical insurance can assure faster payment of their claims if they make sure their correct claim number is on the claim form. About one of every three delays in payment of Medicare medical insurance claims is caused by use of a wrong claim number or omission of the number entirely.

The claim number identifies a claim for Medicare payment on bills for medical services. If you put a wrong claim number—or don't enter a number—on a 'Request for Medicare Payment' form, a search for your correct number is necessary.

If itemized bills are sent in with a claim, the claim number also should be written on each separate bill, he said.

The claim number appears on the health insurance card issued to everyone covered by Medicare. The number has nine digits and a symbol, such as A,B, F2. The number, including the symbol, should be copied onto the designated blank on the 'Request for Medicare Payment' form.

Payment can also be delayed when medical bills are submitted without 'Request for Medicare Payment' forms, or when claims are sent to the wrong address.

The form is available at most doctors' offices and at any social security office. Claims should be sent to The Prudential Insurance Co. of America, Medicare B Division, P.O. Box 1482, High Point, N.C. 27261, the organization that handles Medicare medical insurance payments in this area.

If a doctor and patient agree, the doctor can be paid directly by Medicare. If the patient submits the claim, the Medicare payment goes to the patient. Medicare medical insurance helps pay for doctor bills and many other medical expenses of almost everyone 65 and over, disabled people under 65 who have been entitled to social security disability payments for 24 consecutive months or more, and eligible workers or members of their families who have chronic kidney disease and require renal dialysis or a kidney transplant.

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