

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Is It Safe to Use Eggs That Have Cracks?

Bacteria can enter eggs through cracks in the shell. Never purchase cracked eggs. However, if eggs crack on the way home from the store, break them into a clean container, cover it tightly, keep refrigerated, and use within 2 days. If eggs crack during hard cooking, they are safe.

How Are Eggs Handled Safely?

Proper refrigeration, cooking, and handling should prevent most egg-safety problems. Persons can enjoy eggs and dishes containing eggs if these safe handling guidelines are followed:

- Wash utensils, equipment, and work areas with hot, soapy water before and after contact with eggs.
- Don't keep eggs out of the refrigerator more than 2 hours.
- Raw eggs and other ingredients, combined according to recipe directions, should be cooked immediately or refrigerated and cooked within 24 hours.
- Serve cooked eggs and dishes containing eggs immediately after cooking, or place in shallow containers for quick cooling and refrigerate at once for later use. Use within 3 to 4 days.

Are Easter Eggs Safe?

Sometimes eggs are decorated, used as decorations, and hunted at Easter. Here are some safety tips for Easter eggs.

- *Dyeing eggs:* After hard cooking eggs, dye them and return them to the refrigerator within 2 hours. If eggs are to be eaten, use a food-safe coloring. As with all foods, persons dyeing the eggs should wash their hands before handling the eggs.

- *Hunting Eggs:* Hard-cooked eggs for an egg hunt must be prepared with care to prevent cracking the shells. If the shells crack, bacteria could contaminate the inside. Eggs should be hidden in places that are protected from dirt, pets, and other sources of bacteria. The total time for hiding and hunting eggs should not exceed 2 hours. The "found" eggs must be re-refrigerated and eaten within 7 days of cooking.

**For more information, please contact the Wabash County Health Department,
Food Division, Lynn Dannacher, at (260) 563-0661 ext. 249**