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Family, Food & Finance

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Keeping Food Safe
In An Emergency

Closing Up Your House
For Winter

Toy And Product
Safety Tips

It's Time For Turkey

Favor Foods With
Flavonoids

Wintertime Recipes

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Keeping Food Safe In An Emergency Know You're A-B-C-D's!

Submitted by Katherine Streeter, RD, MBA

Although sometimes we are surprised by an out-of-season power outage, we're getting into the time of year when we should take a good look at our emergency preparedness plan. A critical part of that is knowing what to do with food before, during, and after an emergency. Read on for some tips that will help keep you and your family safe.

A: Always keep potentially refrigerated food at or below 40°F and frozen food at or below 0°F. This may be difficult when the power is out. Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature. The refrigerator will keep food safely cold for about 4 hours if it is unopened. A full freezer will hold the temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full) if the door remains closed. Obtain dry or block ice to keep your refrigerator as cold as possible if the power is going to be out for a prolonged period of time.

B: Be prepared for an emergency by having items on hand that don't require refrigeration and can be eaten cold or heated on the outdoor grill. Shelf-stable food, boxed or canned milk, water, and canned goods should be part of a planned emergency food supply. Make sure you have ready-to-use baby formula for infants and pet food. Remember to use these items and replace them from time to time (6 months-1 year). Be sure to keep a hand-held can opener for an emergency.

C: Consider what you can do ahead of time to store your food safely in an emergency. If you live in a location that could be affected by a flood, place your food on storage shelves that will be safely out of the way of contaminated water. Coolers are a great help for keeping food cold if the power will be out for more than 4 hours – have a couple on hand along with frozen gel packs. When your freezer is not full, keep items close together – this helps the food stay cold longer.

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D: Digital, dial, or instant-read food thermometers and appliance thermometers will help you know if the food is at safe temperatures. Keep appliance thermometers in the refrigerator and freezer at all times. When the power is out, an appliance thermometer will always indicate the temperature in the refrigerator and freezer no matter how long the power has been out. If you're not sure a particular food is cold enough, take its temperature with a food thermometer.

When you have lost your power, please keep in mind these food safety dos and don'ts:

- **DO** keep meat, poultry, fish, dairy, and eggs at 40°F or less and frozen food at or below 0° F or less. Use a food thermometer if you have one.
- **DON'T** use your refrigerated food if it has been sitting in your refrigerator longer than 2-4 hours, especially if you have opened the door at all.
- **DON'T** keep food packed in the snow. Besides not being sanitary, you can't be assured it is cold enough, especially if it is sunny out.
- **DO** refreeze food if it still contains ice crystals – it is safe if still partially frozen.
- **DO** use your judgment. When in doubt, throw it out!

For more information, see:

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/keeping_food_safe_during_an_emergency/index.asp

Closing Up Your House For Winter

Submitted by Diane S. Orr

If you plan on heading south during the cold winter months of our northern climate, be aware that you can save significant amounts of energy if you close off your entire house during the months you are gone. To do this, you must perform a number of chores; otherwise, you may lose far more than you will gain in energy savings.

If you are closing an entire house for the entire winter, consider the following:



- Most or all of the plumbing system must be protected. All hot and cold plumbing supply pipes must be drained. Many times, supply pipes are not pitched to allow them to drain via gravity. Therefore it is often necessary to use an air compressor to blow water from supply pipes. Licensed plumbers have the necessary equipment and knowledge to do this. Water should also be drained from the pressure tank (if the home has a private water supply), water heater, and ice-making refrigerator.
- Homes heated with hot water or steam boilers will also need to have those systems winterized. Given the high expense of replacing a boiler system, it is well worth the money to hire a professional heating person to do this job.
- Drain pipes are easier to winterize than supply pipes. Only the traps within the drain pipes need to be protected from freezing. Pouring an environmentally safe antifreeze solution into all drains (the trap for a toilet is located in the bowl) will keep the water inside traps from freezing. A typical septic tank needs no protection if it is completely below the soil surface.
- Some houses may require a small amount of heat in the basement to prevent **frost heave**, which may occur when there is no heat in the basement to prevent frost from getting below foundation footings. Frost heave can cause foundation walls to move up or be pushed in. In some houses, the circulation of warm air, steam, or hot water from the central heating system may be regulated to place more of the heat in the cellar area and less upstairs.
- If a hydronic heating system will be left operating at a low level, water-carrying pipes may need to be protected by adding an anti-freeze solution to the boiler water supply. Special steps may need to be taken to protect the heating system and the water supply. Consult a heating system technician for further information.
- Make certain the fireplace damper is closed.
- During cold winter months, the air inside of an unheated and unoccupied house is likely to be very dry, and may cause checking and cracking of wood. For this

reason, don't leave fine furniture in the house.

- If a house will be vacant for only a few weeks, it is usually advantageous to turn thermostats down (50° or 55°F) but leave the heating system on. A *little* heat in the house maintains a more constant level of humidity, allowing for less swelling and shrinking of wood floors, furniture, and cabinets.
- For reasons pertaining to both utilities and vandalism, ask a neighbor to stop in once or twice a week to check for possible damage. Tree limbs can break windows; and high winds can damage shingles or shutters. Inexpensive timers with multiple programs can control lights and make a house seem occupied. Make arrangements to have mail and other deliveries stopped, or have someone pick up deliveries regularly. If a fire hydrant is in your yard, ask someone to keep snow cleared away from it in your absence.

Adapted from a fact sheet prepared by Mark A. Pierce, Department of Environmental Design & Analysis, Cornell University

Toy And Product Safety Tips

Submitted by Kathy Bowers



Recent recalls from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and toy manufacturers have raised much concern over the safety of our children's toys. As parents, the best protection we can offer our children is to be informed of potential hazards and select their toys, clothing, and accessories based on current recommendations for what is safe, age appropriate and constructive.

The latest recalls have highlighted the potential hazards of lead poisoning. In addition to using lead in paint, some manufacturers continue to use lead as a low-cost way of adding weight to items like small pieces of jewelry, and to increase flexibility in vinyl goods. In recalling more than one million toys which may be coated with lead paint, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission indicates that lead is toxic when ingested and can cause brain damage linked to learning disabilities, behavioral problems and, at very high

levels, seizure, coma and even death. In addition to toys, lead has been found in jewelry, metal key chains, vinyl bibs, vinyl lunch boxes, vinyl backpacks and clothing with lead-based zippers or buttons. Lead poisoning occurs when toxic levels of lead build up in the body over time. Simply touching a toy containing lead is not an immediate problem, as lead cannot be absorbed through the skin. However, in addition to swallowing an item containing lead, such as a small charm, chewing or mouthing a toy containing lead or coated with lead paint is dangerous. Parents are cautioned not to burn a toy or article containing lead, as lead fumes can be inhaled. The first symptoms of lead poisoning are very general, and include nausea, sluggishness, vomiting, painful gastrointestinal irritation, diarrhea, loss of appetite, colic, weakness and dehydration. Other symptoms may include memory problems, reduced coordination, irritability, hyperactivity, increased sleeping, decreased activity and fatigue, hearing loss, vomiting, slow reflexes, and muscle weakness, affecting mainly the upper extremities. Children who ingest dangerous levels of lead do not always show symptoms right away, and many children with lead poisoning do not exhibit symptoms at all. If you think your child is at risk, your pediatrician can perform a simple blood test.

Other recent product recalls have been based on the danger of magnets, which, when present in children's toys and other items may become detached and swallowed. The Consumer Product Safety Commission has issued a safety alert about the serious dangers magnets pose to children. If two or more magnets or magnetic pieces, or a magnet and another metal object are swallowed separately, they can attract one another through intestinal walls. This traps the magnets in place and can cause intestinal damage, infection, blood poisoning and death. If you suspect that your child has swallowed a magnet, seek immediate medical attention. The CPSC recommends that parents keep small magnets and small pieces containing magnets away from children, and to also

continually monitor items in your home for loose magnetic pieces or missing or dislodged magnets. Use caution in purchasing products made for adults that may contain magnets if there are young children in your home. It is important that parents are knowledgeable about how best to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children. No amount of preventive information can substitute for parental vigilance and supervision – always be aware of where your child is and what he is doing. Source: Mary Krauze, Parenting Coordinator, Cornell Cooperative Extension Orange County

For further information about the dangers of lead poisoning and magnets, product recalls, and creating a healthy play environment for your child, please visit the following websites.

www.cpsc.gov

www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/category/toy.html

www.service.mattel.com/us/recall.asp

www.aap.org/new/toprecall.htm
<http://blogs.consumerreports.org/safety>

www.cehca.org

www.newsforparents.org/expert_play_it_safe.html

www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/grand/toy/toysafe.html

www.goodhousekeeping.com/lead-recalls

It's Time For Turkey

Submitted by: Chris Brown

Every year we get questions on preparing turkey safely for the holidays. Here are answers to commonly asked consumer questions and instructions for roasting turkey.

Thawing a Turkey: Thawing your turkey on the kitchen counter is always dangerous, because the room temperature falls within the danger zone that promotes

active growth of bacteria. Here are the thawing times for a frozen turkey:

Thawing Time in the Refrigerator:

8-12 pounds.....1 to 2 days
12-16 pounds.....2 to 3 days
16-20 pounds.....3 to 4 days
20-24 pounds.....4 to 5 days

Thawing Time in Cold Water:

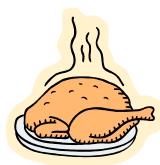
8-12 pounds.....4 to 6 hours
12-16 pounds.....6 to 8 hours
16-20 pounds.....8 to 10 hours
20-24 pounds.....10 to 12 hours

NOTE: CHANGE WATER EVERY 30 MINUTES.

After removing neck and giblets from both the neck and body cavities, rinse turkey inside and out with cold water. Wash sink and any countertops turkey juice has touched with hot soapy water and paper towels so you don't spread dangerous bacteria. Thawed turkey may remain in refrigerator 1-2 days.

Roasting A Turkey: Many generations have always started the roasting process by stuffing their turkey, but since this is another way to invite unwanted bacteria into your dinner, you are better off cooking it separately. This will also save some time, the turkey will take less time to cook, and you will not have to remove the stuffing from the turkey. These times are approximate and should always be used in conjunction with a meat thermometer.

1. Set the oven temperature no lower than **325°F**. Pre-heating is not necessary.
2. Be sure turkey is completely thawed. The times are based on fresh or completely thawed birds at a refrigerator temperature.
3. Place turkey breast side up on a rack in a shallow roasting pan, 2 to 2½ inches deep.
4. Tuck wing tips back under shoulders of bird (called "akimbo").
5. Add one-half cup water to the bottom of pan.
6. In the beginning, a tent of aluminum foil may be placed loosely over the breast of



the turkey for the first 1 to ½ hours, and then removed for browning. Or, a tent of foil may be placed over the turkey after the turkey has reached the desired golden brown. If the foil tent is left on the entire cooking time, it will take longer to cook.

7. For safety and doneness the internal temperature, as registered on a meat thermometer, must reach a minimum of **165°F** in the thigh before removing from the oven. The center of the stuffing should reach 165°F after stand time.
8. Juices should run clear.
9. Let the turkey stand 20 minutes before removing stuffing and carving.

For additional food safety information about meat, poultry, or eggs, call the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at (800) 535-4555. Information adapted from US Department of Agriculture.

**Cooking time for thawed or fresh turkey:
Unstuffed Timing**

Whole Turkey

8-12 pounds.....	2¾ to 3 hours
12-14 pounds.....	3 to 3¾ hours
14-18 pounds.....	4 to 4¼ hours
18-20 pounds.....	4¼ to 4¾ hours
20-24 pounds.....	4½ to 5 hours

Breast, Half

2-3 pounds.....	50-60 minutes
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Breast, Whole

4-6 pounds.....	1½ to 2¾ hours
6-8 pounds.....	2¼ to 3¼ hours

Note: These times are approximate and should always be used in conjunction with a properly placed thermometer.

Carving Basics

1. Pull the leg away from the body until the thighbone pops out of its socket. Cut between the thigh joint and the body to remove the leg. Separate the drumstick and thigh by cutting through the ball joint. Hold each part by the bone and cut off ¼ inch slices.
2. Hold the turkey with a meat fork and make a deep cut into the breast meat just above the wing area. This marks the end of each breast meat slice.



3. Slice down from the breast into the cut made in Step 2. Slice meat ¼ inch thick.

Source: Extension Connection, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Delaware County issue November/December 2005

Favor Foods With Flavonoids

Submitted by Chris Brown

If you eat plenty of vegetables and fruits today, you probably will consume a hearty supply of flavonoids. This class of phytochemicals is emerging in studies as a vital player in a healthy diet to lower risk for cancer.

“Flavonoids are interesting because they are a broad group,” says David Heber, MD, PhD and Director of the UCLA Center for Human Nutrition at the University of California, Los Angeles. “For people eating five or more fruits and vegetables a day, it is the largest group of phytochemicals they get.”

One Big Family

So far, researchers estimate more than 5,000 flavonoids exist, and they expect more will be discovered. Flavonoids are broken into subclasses. Two are anthocyanins, which produce the deep purple-blue colors in foods such as blueberries and eggplants; and flavones, commonly found in citrus fruit. The family of flavonoids also includes ECGC, found in green tea; quercetin, available in apples; and genistein, found in soy. Besides fruits and vegetables, we get flavonoids from nuts and dark chocolate.



A specific food can contain flavonoids, but typically one prominent, says Seema Bhagwat, MS, a nutritionist who co-lead the first updated of the USDA Database for the Flavonoid Content of Selected Foods. The data base currently lists the content for 26 flavonoids in 393 foods. USDA researchers analyzed eight samples of each food, collected at different times of the year.

Flavonoid-Diet Connection

In the lab, studies show that flavonoids shrink tumors, kill cancer cells, prevent DNA damage that leads to cancer and boost

cell activity that fights carcinogens. The few recent human studies analyzing flavonoid consumption and health effects also show a link between flavonoid-rich foods and lower risk of some cancers.

- A 2007 study of 183,518 residents of California and Hawaii suggest that those who ate the most flavonols from foods such as onions, apples and berries had 23% lower risk for pancreatic cancer than subjects who didn't, particularly if they were smokers.

- A 2006 study by Dr. Heber found that prostate cancer survivors who drank an 8 ounce glass of flavonoid-rich pomegranate juice daily had slower rates of cancer recurrence. The study involved 50 men who had been treated for prostate cancer and showed signs of rising prostate-specific antigen (PSA). (The faster PSA doubles in the blood, the more likely patients are to die from the cancer). It took 54 months for PSA blood levels to double when the men drank pomegranate juice, compared to 15 months before they drank the juice.

- Another 2006 study concluded that certain flavonoids significantly decrease the risk of colorectal cancer. Researchers analyzed the diets of almost 2,000 colorectal cancer patients and 4,000 healthy control subjects. Six classes of flavonoids were studied, including anthocyanins (in purple-red fruits and vegetables) and flavonols (found in apples, spinach, pears and many other foods). After adjusting for common risk factors like alcohol consumption and physical activity, the researchers found those who consumed the highest amounts of anthocyanins reduced their risk of colorectal cancer by 33%; is flavones (in soybeans) by 24%; and flavonols by 36%.

- The same research team found that people who ate the most flavonoids of all kinds reduced their risk for kidney cancer by 20%, compared to those who ate the least. Two specific flavonoids, flavones (found in leafy green vegetables and fruits) and flavonols each produced a reduction of more than 30%.

The How's of Flavonoids

Lab studies indicate many ways flavonoids may decrease cancer development and recurrence. One common theory is that flavonoids act as antioxidants, compounds that help repair or prevent damage from oxygen molecules called "free radicals". However, a December 2006 review article raised questions about flavonoids' antioxidant ability.

According to co-author Balz Frei, PhD and Director of the Linus Pauling Institute at Oregon State University flavonoids are absorbed poorly in the body. He suggests the increase in antioxidant levels seen after consuming flavonoid-rich foods does not stem directly from flavonoids, but from other substances in these foods.

"We are not saying that flavonoids do not have health benefits", said Frei. "We are just saying they may have health benefits independent of any antioxidant mechanism."

One of those mechanisms might be the role flavonoids play in inflammation. "We know oxidation causes changes that may promote cancer," said Dr. Eber. "Now we are finding inflammation is a common underlying cause." Flavonoids could break up the cell signaling system involved in inflammation and activate immune-related proteins that help prevent inflammation.

Lab studies also show that flavonoids may inhibit the growth of a tumor's blood vessels and influence gene expression. With all the possible ways flavonoids may protect our health, however, they are still only part of the whole healthy diet picture. For cancer prevention, AICR recommends selecting a wide variety of vegetables and fruits in the 5-10 servings you eat every day to get other healthy phytochemicals, vitamins, minerals and fiber along with these powerful compounds.

A Few Flavonoids

The Flavonoid	Some Foods It Is In...	Some Of What It May Do...
Capsaicin	Chile Peppers	Induce prostate cancer cells to self destruct
Catechins	Green Tea, Grapes	Act as antioxidants; inhibit protein activity that can damage DNA
Coumarin	Strawberries, Apricots, Cherries & Cinnamon	Lessen tissue swelling; increase blood flow
Curcumin	Turmeric (yellow spice in curry powder)	Inhibit growth of gastric and other cancers
Genistein	Soy Foods	Protect against breast cancer if consumed at certain times
Limonoids	Citrus Fruits	Inhibit breast cancer cells
Epicatechin	Cocoa, Tea & Grapes	Act as antioxidant; improve blood flow
Delphinidin	Blueberries, Black Grapes	Inhibit formation of blood vessels for cancer cell
Quercetin	Apples, Capers & Celery	Acts as antioxidant; anti-inflammatory

Source: American Institute for Cancer Research Newsletter Fall 2007

WINTERTIME RECIPES

Submitted by Katherine Streeter, R.D., M.B.A

Keep cozy in the cold with these recipes that will warm you from the inside out. Each contains less than 20% calories from fat, and has less than 2 teaspoons added sugars per serving. Enjoy!

6-Can Soup – Serves 8

10-3/4 -oz can low-sodium tomato soup
 15 -oz can whole kernel corn, drained and rinsed
 15 -oz can mixed vegetables, drained and rinsed
 15 -oz can chili beans, undrained
 14-1/2 -oz can low-sodium diced tomatoes, undrained
 14-1/2 -oz can low-sodium, reduced-fat chicken broth

Wash hands. Combine all ingredients in a slow cooker. Cover and cook on low for 3-4 hours. You may make substitutions in this recipe but this will change the nutrition facts.

Per serving: Calories 200, 10 calories (or 5%) from fat, Fat 1.5g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 400mg, Carbohydrate 42g, Protein 10g, Fiber 11g.

Green Bean Sauté Yield: 6 servings

1 cup chopped onion
 1 cup sliced mushrooms
 1 teaspoon minced garlic
 1-(16 oz.) green beans, drained

Wash hands. Spray a skillet with a non-stick cooking spray. Sauté onions, mushrooms, and garlic. Add green beans and heat through.

Per serving: Calories 30, 0 calories (or 0%) from fat, Fat 0g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 200mg, Carbohydrate 6g, Protein 2g, Fiber 2g.

Creamy Rice Pudding – Serves 6

3 cups rice, cooked
2 Tablespoons butter
3 cups milk (low-fat)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 cup sugar substitute
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon salt

Wash hands. Combine all ingredients, except vanilla, in a saucepan. Cook over medium heat until thickened, 25 to 30 minutes, stirring often. Add vanilla. Pour into serving dish.

Add pineapple chunks or raisins if desired but this will change the nutrient facts below. Serve hot or cold and sprinkle with cinnamon.

Source: Native Treasures – Recipes for Healthy Living (WNY Coalition for Diabetes Prevention)

Per serving: Calories 190, 35 calories (or 18%) from fat, Fat 4g, Cholesterol 15mg, Sodium 160mg, Carbohydrate 40g, Protein 6g, Fiber <1g.

***TIP:** This time of year can be a lot of fun for kids. Keep them involved in your family's traditions by including them in age-appropriate meal preparation activities. Little ones can learn about color and shapes, and may want to use their hands to help. Older children can follow recipes and instructions, and use math skills by measuring ingredients.*