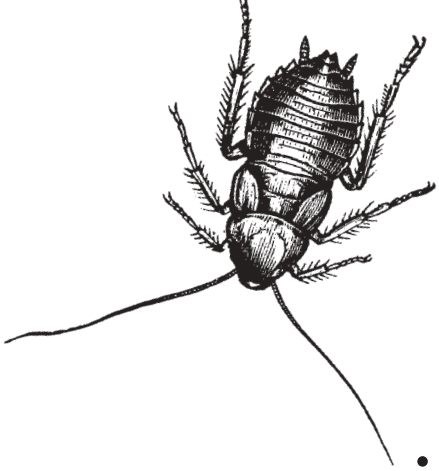
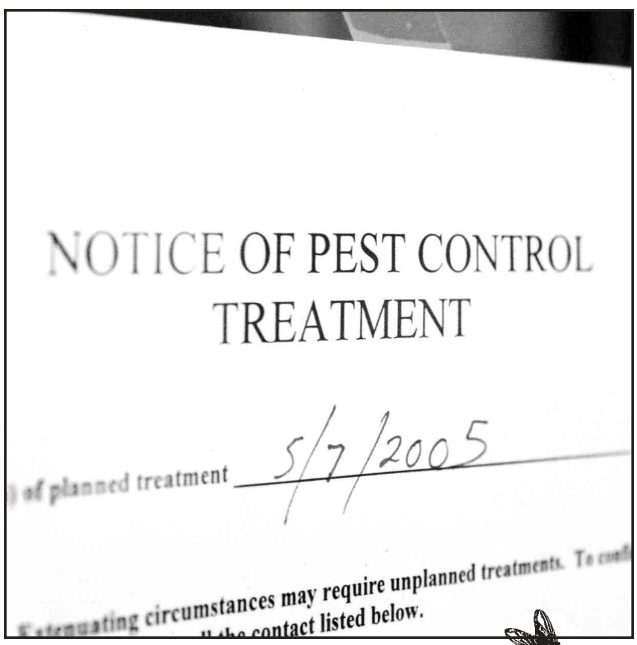


Summer sanitation

Review basic practices to prevent disease

Summer is an excellent time to review health and sanitation practices. The warm weather allows you to inspect the building and make needed repairs. Vacation season provides a break in routine that you can use to update parent handbooks and train staff about sanitation and other topics.

This article offers information on pest control, head lice, and food sanitation practices. For information on handwashing, diapering, toilet learning, taking a child's temperature, disinfecting surfaces, dealing with illness, and preventing disease while swimming, see the sanitation article in the Summer 2000 issue of *Texas Child Care*.


NOTICE OF PEST CONTROL TREATMENT

of planned treatment 5/7/2005

attenuating circumstances may require unplanned treatments.

the contact listed below.

Pest control

You open the pantry door to get graham crackers for snack, and a roach scurries behind the cereal boxes. Then you set the crackers on the snack table, and a fly lands on the cut-up bananas.

It's time for the roach and fly spray, you think. Or is it?

As a child care provider, you walk a fine line between getting rid of pests and protecting children from poisonous pesticides.

Dangers of pests and pesticides

Pests are any insects or small animals that can cause disease or harm. Rats, mice, mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas can carry diseases such as salmonella, murine typhus, West Nile virus, encephalitis, and Lyme disease. Flies, roaches, and mice can contaminate food. Studies have shown that asthma attacks can be attributed to roach droppings and cast skins. Fire ants, bees, wasps, scorpions, and certain spiders can bite, causing pain or even threatening life in people allergic to the venom.

Pesticides are chemicals that kill pests. The toxins in pesticides pose serious health risks to people and the environment. Studies have shown that infants and children are more susceptible to these health risks than adults. Because children are more active on the floor where pesticides are often applied, they are at greater risk for exposure. Their bodies are still developing, making it harder for them to cope with the negative effects of pesticides.

Pesticides may inhibit the absorption of nutrients needed for healthy growth. A child's excretory system may not be developed enough to fully remove harmful chemicals. There are also critical periods in human development when exposure to a toxin can permanently change the way an individual's biological system operates.

Because of the dangers associated with pesticides, at least 34 states regulate the application of pesticides in schools. In Texas, for example, only licensed pest control firms or individuals may apply pesticides. In addition, parents must be notified at the time of their child's enrollment that the facility occasionally applies pesticides. This required notification gives you an opportunity to discuss pesticide use with parents. As a best practice, you may want to maintain a list of parents who want to be notified before any pest control application.

As challenging as it may seem, you have a number of options to ensure that pest control is as safe, legal, and cost-effective as possible.

Start with prevention

You can reduce pest problems and lessen the need for pesticides through Integrated Pest Management. IPM combines prevention, environmentally sound practice, partnership with pest management experts, and common sense.

Inspect your facility. The first step is to look for ways that pests may enter your building and places they can hide. Ideally you will have this done by a trained pest control specialist. A pest control firm may be willing to do this inspection free as part of preparing a bid for service. The inspection should pay particular attention to garbage and food areas in addition to doors, windows, and other building features.

Another option is to use the checklist available from the Southwest Technical Resource Center, which was created by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2001. See box above. The checklist not only lists items to inspect but also explains each item in the instructions. For example, item No. 6 says, "Doors seal tightly." The instructions explain: "If light is visible under doors, weatherstripping should be installed to prevent entry of rodents and crawling insects and spiders."

In addition to an inspection, set up a pest-sighting log. Ask staff to note which pests they see, location, and time and date of sighting. To help staff identify common insects, refer to a field guide with color photos. Texas Cooperative Extension offers one online, http://insects.tamu.edu/fieldguide/.

A log can be useful in identifying specific pests and judging the severity of a problem. Once your IPM program is underway, you can use the log to note the response by a pest control technician. A sample log is available from the Southwest Technical Resource Center. See box above.

Block entry. Once you have identified places where pests can enter and hide, take steps to prevent them from coming in. These steps may include repairs such as 1) filling cracks, 2) covering holes, 3) installing windows screens and screen doors, 4) placing weatherstripping around doors, and 5) placing grates or screens on drains and vents.

Other steps include changing behavior. Teach children and adults to avoid leaving doors standing open. Inspect items for pests before bringing them inside. Check backpacks and grocery items as well as toys and materials that have been used outdoors.

Clean up outdoors. Make your facility less attractive to pests by reducing what they're looking for—food, water, and shelter. Cut down tall grass and weeds next to the building. Keep shrubs and wood mulch at least a foot away from exterior walls. To discourage ants, maintain a healthy lawn. If you

Getting started with IPM

The Southwest Technical Resource Center offers a variety of forms, information, and help on pest control. The center consists of IPM specialists of the Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico Cooperative Extension agencies.

See the IPM in Schools Web site at http://schoolipm.tamu.edu. Download the forms below from the "Resources" section of the Web site or subscribe to a bimonthly newsletter. To subscribe, send an e-mail to schoolipm@tamu.edu, and type "subscribe" in the subject line.

- IPM Facilities Inspection Report
- IPM Sighting Log and Application Record
- School Pest News, bimonthly newsletter

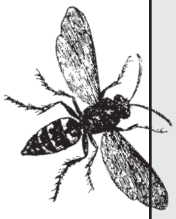
Or contact:

Janet Hurley, program coordinator
Southwest School IPM Technical Resource Center
Dallas, Texas
Office: 972-952-9213
E-mail: ja-hurley@tamu.edu

Typical pests

Ants. In food areas, eliminate ants promptly because they may contaminate food, although to a lesser degree than flies or roaches. In nonfood areas, ants are usually only a nuisance. Ants outside a building that are not migrating inside are more beneficial than detrimental. Leave them alone. The exception is fire ants (see below).

Bats. Bats are night creatures that feed on mosquitoes and other night-flying insects. However, if allowed to roost in an area for a long time, the bat droppings can become a health hazard. If someone handles a sick bat on the playground, there could be a serious health problem.



Biting or stinging pests. Bees, yellow jackets, wasps, brown recluse spiders, and black widow spiders pose a serious health threat, especially to people who are allergic to their stings and bites. Do not tolerate their presence. Remove wasp and yellow jacket nests immediately. Consult with a pest control professional if you find a nest in or near your building.

Cereal pests. Eliminate weevils and other pests that infest flour and cereal products. Ingestion of insects and microorganisms in cereal products can cause illness.

Cockroaches. Do not tolerate cockroaches in any area. They can carry several microorganisms that cause illness, such as salmonella, and create health problems, including asthmatic reactions.

Fire ants. Fire ants, which have invaded Texas and southeastern states, will attack anything that disturbs them. They sting repeatedly, so a person who is attacked will usually be stung several times. Eradicate fire ant infestations immediately.

Fleas. Fleas infest the coats of cats, dogs, and other animals and feed on the animal's blood. They can land on carpet and survive for one or two weeks without feeding. They can bite humans and transmit diseases like murine typhus and cat scratch disease. While an occasional flea may not pose a threat, address flea infestations promptly.

House flies. In nonfood areas, an occasional fly is more a nuisance than a threat. Many flies in a nonfood area, however, could be a sign of a sanitation problem that needs to be addressed. In food areas, do not tolerate any flies. A fly's foot pads are sticky and pick up debris wherever the fly lands. If it lands on garbage or feces and then lands on food, that food becomes contaminated.

Mice and rats. Do not tolerate these rodents in any area. Mice and rats contaminate food by gnawing into unopened packages and by urinating or defecating on open food or food preparation areas. They can enter through existing openings such as plumbing holes and vents, and they can gnaw around floor cracks or electrical outlets to get inside. In addition to building damage, they can gnaw into an electrical wire and cause a fire. A bite from a rat can be more serious than one from a mouse, but both rodents can transmit disease.

Mosquitoes. Mosquitoes can transmit many diseases including encephalitis, malaria, and yellow fever. They breed in standing water and feed on blood and plant juices. An occasional mosquito may not pose a threat, but an infestation must be addressed.

Ticks. Ticks are second only to mosquitoes in transmitting disease. Ticks can carry many microorganisms and transmit Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and other illnesses. They perch in grass and weeds and feed on the blood of people, animals, reptiles, and birds.

Other insects. Crickets, spiders (except Brown Recluse and Black Widow), June bugs, millipedes, and similar insects are not a health threat. They become a nuisance only if they appear in large numbers or near open food areas. Termites can cause serious damage to a building and should be treated promptly.

Other pests. Raccoons are night creatures and ordinarily would not come in contact with children or staff. However, they can get into garbage and create a mess that attracts flies and other pests. They can also carry fleas. Squirrels are generally not a health threat. They can cause physical damage to a building, however, and they can carry fleas.

Adapted from "Determine Tolerance of Pest Activity," *A Practical Guide to Management of Common Pest in Schools.* 1999. Illinois Department of Public Health, www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/entpestfshts.htm. Supplemented with other sources, as cited in references.

apply fertilizer, do it lightly in spring, summer, and fall rather than in one heavy application. Remove trash, stacked wood, cardboard boxes, and other materials standing next to the building. These materials give pests places to hide.

Outdoor lights near doors attract insects; consider moving the lights away from the door but to a location so that they still shine at doorways. Experts recommend placing the lights 30 feet from the entryway, using sodium vapor lights instead of mercury vapor lights.

Don't let water accumulate in unused wading pools, rain gutters, buckets, or ground holes. Repair dripping faucets and keep from over-watering plants and lawns. Keep trash cans and dumpsters at least 50 feet away from the building entrances. Keep lids on garbage cans closed, and clean cans regularly.

Clean up indoors. Inside your facility, maintain a positive air pressure by using an effective heating and cooling system. Empty and clean closets and storage areas at least once a year. Eliminate clutter that may harbor pests. Keep floors swept and mopped, and vacuum carpet and rugs. Clean pet cages regularly, and knock down spider webs.

Store food in sealed, plastic containers rather than cardboard boxes. Rotate food stock so that the oldest food is eaten first. Promptly clean up any spilled food. Dispose of all food scraps after meals and snacks.

Use nonchemical control

After identifying pests, consider mechanical control measures wherever possible before using pesticides. If you have only one or two flies, for example, use a fly swatter. Before treating carpet for fleas, use a vacuum cleaner with a rotary beater bar. It will pick up a significant number of flea eggs and larva.

Ask your licensed pest control professional to use light traps, flypaper, glue boards, sticky traps, funnel traps, and snap traps. For yellow jackets or bees, for example, consider placing yellow jacket traps in trees close to the problem area.

Be careful to place these traps and boards where children cannot reach them and where adults and children will not get fingers or toes caught in them. Keep a record of where these traps are and the date they were set. Incidentally, glue boards are also helpful in monitoring the type and number of pests in the facility.

For other nonchemical options, check the Web site of Beyond Pesticides, a national nonprofit membership organization. Study the fact sheets on controlling individual pests at www.beyondpesticides.org/ccpai/index.htm. Before using home remedies, consult with your licensed pest control manager to ensure compliance with regulations.

Pesticides—a last resort

In some situations, nonchemical solutions are impractical, and you must use pesticides. If so, your decisions must comply with laws and regulations.

ASK THAT "GREEN" PRODUCTS BE USED
WHENEVER POSSIBLE.

Perhaps the most critical decision is who will apply the pesticide. Twenty-six states have minimum requirements for pest control applicators at schools. In Texas, for example, state law requires that all pest control applicators at child care centers and schools, regardless of the product or device used, be licensed. Texas allows you to meet this requirement by 1) contracting with a licensed, commercial pest control business, 2) using an employee who is a licensed, noncommercial applicator, or 3) a combination of the two.

When making your decision, consider the following factors:

Cost. The cost of contracting with a licensed firm varies widely depending upon the size of the facility, the type and number of pests, the geographic area, and other factors. When a pest problem gets out of control, get bids from several companies, and only those that are properly licensed. In Texas, you can check licensing status online at www.spcbtx.org/license/lic_search.htm. Develop a list of specifications you want the company to follow, and place

these in your bid. Talk with companies about their philosophy of pest control. Look for a firm that's willing to work with you to achieve control with the least health risk.

The cost of licensing an employee can range from $2,000 to $3,000. Training, manuals, examination fees, and an initial license will average about $220, not counting time and travel. Basic equipment, such as a compressed air sprayer, duster, bait gun, granule spreader, chemical-resistant gloves, and goggles will cost roughly $500. Re-occurring annual fixed costs, such as license renewal, continuing education, liability insurance, and supplies will be between $1,700 and $2,400 per applicator. These figures do not include secure pesticide storage and termite treatments.

If employees are fully occupied with current duties, it may be necessary to hire an additional person to do pest control. The person's wages and benefits add to the cost.

Availability of service. Location in a small town or rural area could limit pest control service. Texas, for example, has more than 3,300 licensed, commercial pest control businesses, most of which are concentrated in major metropolitan areas. If your facility is in a small town, it may be worth the cost to have one person on staff licensed to handle emergency situations.

Liability. A child's illness or disability associated with pest control could result in a lawsuit against you, the applicator, and the pest control business. In Texas, the Texas Structural Pest Control Board—the state licensing agaency for pest control operators—requires all licensed pest control businesses and certain noncommercial facilities to maintain liability insurance. A child care employee who is a licensed applicator must comply with this requirement.

Other states have similar requirements. The minimum insurance requirement in Texas includes $200,000 for bodily injury and property damage and a total annual aggregate of $300,000 for all situations in which damage resulted from pest control activities. Many pest control businesses carry insurance in excess of the minimum requirement. By having pest control done by a licensed business, the compensation burden is shared by the pest control business and its insurance carrier.

Expertise. Safe and effective pest control requires knowledge of pests, pest control techniques, and pesticides. Texas, for example, harbors more than 30,000 species of insects, although only a few hundred may be considered pests. In addition, there are several species of rodents as well as other small mammals, snakes, birds, mollusks, and arachnids that can inhabit buildings and grounds.

In addition to correctly identifying pests, applicators must know pest biology, exclusion techniques, pest control equipment, and proper use of pesticides. They must be able to read pesticide labels and follow the directions. Licensed applicators have passed exams that test their knowledge of mixing and calculating appropriate amounts of pesticide products. Applicators also must keep records and comply with state and federal laws.

Facility Size. The size of your building and grounds and the number of children in your care can significantly affect the type and amount of pest control to be done.

For fire ants, use the Texas Two-Step

Texas Cooperative Extension recommends a two-step treatment for fire ants. This requires 1) application of a fire ant bait twice a year around the perimeter of your grounds, and 2) treating mounds with a low-toxic insecticide.

For bait, Janet Hurley, coordinator of the Southwest Technical Resource Center, recommends an insect growth regulator like Award or Ascend. If a mound appears, she suggests Safer Fire Ant Killer, available at home and building supply stores. You mix this concentrated liquid product with water and pour it over the mound. The product warns against contact with skin and eyes, but the active ingredient is a botanical. And it takes out the mound immediately.

For more information, go to http://fireants.tamu.edu.

Managing pest control

Regardless of whether you assign pest control to an employee or contract with a business, you have options in the types of pesticides used and how they're applied.

Pesticides come in a wide variety of formulations, but sprays, dusts, and baits are the most common. Baits are a mixture of a pesticide and food or an attractant. They are well-suited to IPM programs because they are pest-specific and can be used in childproof containers. Baits require correct identification of the pest species, especially ants, because

different species prefer different foods. Sprays and dusts can often be applied to inaccessible areas where pests hide, which lowers the chance of human contact.

Pesticides represent a potential risk to the environment, to wildlife, and to human health. That risk increases when a pesticide is used incorrectly, stored improperly, or discarded carelessly. All pesticides are potentially dangerous. Unsafe use can harm the applicator, staff, children, pets, and neighbors. Misuse of pesticides is also a violation of both federal and state laws.

To reduce risk, have all pesticide applications done after business hours when no children and staff are present. This is especially true if a residual or aerosol treatment is used.

Ask that "green" products—with ingredients that have minimal negative impact on the environment—be used whenever possible. Arrange pest control applications on an as-needed basis rather than according to an arbitrary schedule.

Notify parents and staff

Because some people are sensitive to pesticides, it makes sense to notify everyone in advance. At least 21 states require some kind of prenotification. In Texas, for example, if parents indicate at enrollment that they want prior notification of a pesticide application, you must notify them in writing at least 72 hours in advance. This requirement does not apply to baits, gels, or any EPA-exempt pesticides. In an emergency application, you must notify parents as soon as possible after the application.

Also in Texas, you must post a Notice of Pest Control Treatment sign in a common access area at least 48 hours before a pesticide will be applied.

IPM makes sense

You can have fewer pests by using accepted sanitation practices. Integrated Pest Management offers a safe, proven, and usually less costly program for controlling pests in your facility. It uses common sense to remove sources of food, water, and shelter for pests, and it includes the careful use of pesticides when needed.

Pest control regulations in Texas

The Texas Structural Pest Control Board, a state government agency, offers information about pest control licensing and other regulations affecting child care centers and schools in Texas.

- Get information at the Web site, www.spcbtx.org.
- Subscribe to a free e-mail newslist at www.spcbtx.org/news/newslists.htm.
- Download sample prenotification signs in English and Spanish at www.spcbtx.org/forms/Handouts/handoutforms.htm.
- If you have questions, call Jeff Isler, program specialist, (512) 305-8288.

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Head lice

Four-year-old Jennifer seems to be having more trouble than usual listening while you read *Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain.* Every few seconds she reaches under her brown curls and scratches her head. When you finish the story, you call her to come and stand with you at the window. In the light, you examine her hair. It's just as you suspect: head lice.

Having head lice does not pose a serious health risk, but an outbreak can be troublesome and time-consuming. If not treated promptly, head lice can spread rapidly through a child care facility or school.

What they are

Head lice are parasitic insects, typically 1/6- to 1/8-inch long. The females glue their whitish eggs (nits) to hair shafts, usually near the scalp. The eggs hatch in seven to 10 days.

Head lice spread from person to person by direct head-to-head contact. They also may be transmitted by sharing hats, scarves, combs, headphones, and similar items. Lice cannot hop or fly.

Head lice live only on humans, not on pets or other animals. Lice cannot live apart from a human for more than 24 to 48 hours. They cannot reproduce in carpets or upholstery.

How to control

The best control is prevention. Consider the following steps:

- Train all staff to identify head lice. The sooner lice are detected, the easier they are to control.

Don't use pesticides on head lice

Never apply pesticides to any clothing, combs and brushes, bedding, furniture, or flooring in an attempt to control head lice. Flea bombs, insect sprays, and other chemicals do not control head lice. Such chemicals only expose children and staff to needless risk and create unnecessary liability for your facility.

If you are concerned about head lice on carpets or countertops, vacuum them or wipe smooth surfaces with a damp cloth.

- Discourage children from sharing combs, brushes, hair accessories, scarves, or hats.
- Wipe the headphones in the library center often with a damp rag.
- Store each child's cap and coat in a separate cubby.
- Educate parents about head lice.

THE SOONER LICE ARE DETECTED, THE EASIER THEY ARE TO CONTROL.

Many schools and child care centers have adopted policies for dealing with head lice. In Texas, for example, child care centers must follow state regulations that do not allow infested children in attendance. Parents may bring the child back after at least one treatment with a head lice shampoo. A second shampoo treatment is recommended within seven to 10 days to kill any lice that may have hatched in the meantime.

If an infestation occurs, take action immediately.

- Designate a person to check all children. Be sensitive to children's feelings. Head lice are not dangerous, but your discovery can create fear and shame in children and their families.
- Alert parents to the outbreak. Encourage all parents to check their children's hair carefully over the next few days.

Signs of head lice

- frequent head scratching
- complaints of itchy scalp or head
- redness behind the ears or on back of neck

- Inform the parents of an infested child about your exclusion and readmission policy. Have parents shampoo the child's hair with a head lice shampoo, and recommend the treatment to everyone in the child's family. Encourage parents to wash combs and brushes in hot, soapy water and to launder bedding and clothes.
- Launder cot sheets and dress-up clothes in hot water and dry them in the dryer. Wash stuffed animals or vacuum them thoroughly. Use a vacuum cleaner on unwashable items such as wool and straw hats.
- For the next few days, continue checking all children. Parents of infested children must verify they have shampooed the child's hair. Continue checking these children for 10 days after treatment.

Reference

A School's Guide to the 'Nitty-Gritty' About Head Lice. 2004. Cooperative Extension Service, University of Georgia, http://pubs.caes.uga.edu/caespubs/pubcd/c850.htm.

Resource

For a downloadable pamphlet for parents and other resources, see http://schoolipm.tamu.edu/resources.htm.

Sanitary food handling

While attending a Saturday training conference, you drop by the snack bar for a sandwich. Behind the counter stands a young woman wearing latex gloves. "May I help you?" she asks. You look at the selections in the case. Just as you are about to ask for the ham and cheese, you notice that the woman brings one hand up to her face and wipes her nostrils.

You stand speechless for a moment. Finally you say, "Thanks, but I'm really not hungry."

• • •

Food service workers are often encouraged to wear gloves while handling food. But the use of gloves may provide workers a false sense of security. They may not understand that wiping one's nose or touching one's hair or face contaminates the gloves and cancels the value of wearing gloves in the first place.

Wearing rubber or latex gloves is no substitute for good personal hygiene. Whether workers wear gloves or rely on handwashing, the goal is to limit the amount of bacteria in food by being as clean as possible while preparing and serving it.

Guidelines for hand sanitation

Wash your hands or replace gloves:

- before you begin preparing food;
- after coughing, sneezing, or touching your hair or face;

- after using the toilet;
- after handling raw meats or other potentially hazardous foods; and
- before you resume preparing food after changing tasks or an interruption, such as answering the phone, wiping a child's runny nose, handling garbage, or cleaning up a spill off the floor.

Before donning gloves, wash hands thoroughly. If you drop a glove on the floor, discard it.

More guidelines for handling food

Cleanliness applies not only to the hands but everything that might contaminate food through contact. Follow these guidelines when preparing or handling food:

- Wear a clean apron and clothing.
- Don't handle food if you have a sore throat or diarrhea.
- Cover cuts and burns with plastic bandages.
- Wash countertops, tables, chopping blocks, knives, pans, and other preparation equipment with soap and water after each use.
- Sanitize preparation items as prescribed by your local health department. One method is to wipe or rinse them with a chlorine bleach solution and let them air dry. Make the solution by adding one tablespoon of bleach per gallon of water. Another method is to wash them in a dishwasher with water at 180 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Don't handle raw food and cooked food in the same area or with the same utensils unless you clean and sanitize the area and utensils between uses.

If you use gloves

Wearing rubber or latex gloves may prevent the transmission of foodborne illness from a person's hands to food. Wearing gloves may also help protect a person against infection or injury in the kitchen. But gloves can also cause a skin rash or allergic reaction.

To reduce these negative effects:

- Use synthetic rubber gloves. You can't tell the difference between natural and synthetic just by looking. Read the label carefully or contact the manufacturer.
- Avoid unnecessary use of gloves by using utensils or single-use wax paper squares to handle food.

- Use one cutting board for raw meat and a different one for vegetables and fruits.
- Use a spoon—not your finger—to taste food while cooking. Use a clean spoon for each taste.
- Serve food soon after cooking. Don't hold food at room temperature or in an oven below 125 degrees. Food that has been out for more than three or four hours may be unsafe.
- Sanitize dishes, utensils, and serving dishes after every use. If you cannot sanitize these items, use disposable, single-use items instead.
- Serve food on clean plates, napkins, or other sanitary surfaces such as a highchair tray. Never serve food on the floor.
- Have children and adults wash their hands before eating. Help infants and toddlers wash theirs.
- Wash reusable bibs, tablecloths, and placemats after each use. Discard disposable napkins, bibs, placements, dishes, and utensils after each use.
- Separate the food preparation area from eating, play, and bathroom areas.
- Don't store toxic chemicals and cleaning supplies with food.

Control food temperature

Bacteria that cause food poisoning are sensitive to temperature. They grow rapidly at room temperature, generally 70-80 degrees Fahrenheit. In fact, bacteria can grow at any temperature between 40 and 140 degrees. Some foods are more prone to bacteria growth than others. These are moist, low-acid, high-protein food such as cream pies, meat, gravy, milk, eggs, and any dishes containing eggs such as potato salad.

Refrigeration can stop bacterial growth. Because food cools from the outside toward the center, it can take the center much longer to reach 40 degrees or lower. For that reason, experts recommend storing make-ahead dishes and leftovers in shallow containers so the center cools quickly.

Refrigeration and freezing do not destroy bacteria. If food is contaminated going into the freezer, it will be contaminated coming out. As soon as the food warms up again, bacteria can begin growing.

Food temperature guidelines

- Store perishable food in the refrigerator until ready to heat and serve.
- Thaw raw meat in the refrigerator, not at room temperature.
- Make sure refrigerators keep food below 40 degrees Fahrenheit.
- When storing leftovers, place them in shallow, covered containers in the refrigerator.
- When reheating foods, heat them to at least 165 degrees in the center.

Food storage guidelines

- Keep the pantry dry and cool, between 50 and 70 degrees.
- Place food containers on shelves, not on the floor, to allow cleaning underneath.
- Note expiration dates, and rotate stock so you use older products first. Discard all leaking and bulging cans.

HAVE CHILDREN AND ADULTS WASH THEIR
HANDS BEFORE EATING.

- Place frozen items in the freezer as soon as you bring them from the store. Store at zero degrees Fahrenheit.
- Store food in containers intended only for food storage, not in garbage bags, for example.

Keep wading pools sanitary

Wading pools, which are pools 2 feet deep or less, can provide extra fun for children in the summer. If you use one, follow these sanitary guidelines:

- Drain out the water after each day's use.
- Sanitize the pool every day with a chlorine bleach solution and let air dry.
- Store the pool out of the children's reach when not in use.
- Store the pool so it won't collect water.
- Use wading pools only with toilet-trained children. For children who are not toilet-trained, you might offer a trickling hose or a gentle water sprinkler instead.

- Use eggs within a week or two. If eggs are cracked, use them only in foods that will be thoroughly cooked.
- Store meat in the coldest part of the refrigerator.
- Freeze fresh meat, poultry, and fish if you can't use it within two to three days after you buy it.
- Don't use home-canned foods in your facility.
- Don't rely on look, smell, or taste to judge a food's safety. When in doubt, throw it out.

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