

## **EASTER EGG SAFETY**



What would Easter be without decorated eggs? Many family traditions involve coloring or dyeing the eggs, then hiding and ultimately hunting those eggs. Did you know if you hide those colored eggs you are not supposed to eat them, especially if they have not been refrigerated? Following a few simple tips can make you have a happy and safe Easter!!

- Inspect your eggs before purchasing them to make sure they are not cracked or dirty.
- Be sure to keep your eggs refrigerated until it's time to cook them.
- Wash hands thoroughly before handling the eggs and at every stage in the process.
- Whatever the style of preparation, eggs should always be cooked well.
- When finished dyeing or coloring eggs and you will eat them, make sure they are refrigerated up until time of consumption.
- If using dyed eggs for centerpieces for your Easter table, for the egg hunt, or decorating purposes, do not eat those eggs. Discard them immediately after the event.
- Uncracked, refrigerated, hard cooked eggs will stay fresh for one week.
- Make sure to fully cook your hard boiled eggs for dyeing that way any harmful bacteria will not be transferred.
- Do not eat eggs that have been cooked and been out of the refrigerator for more than two hours, your chances of food poisoning increases rapidly.
- Remember the Temperature Danger Zone 40°F-140°F, this is where bacteria multiply rapidly. Make sure cold food stays cold and hot food stays hot!!
- When boiling eggs, place a single layer of eggs in a saucepan and place enough water 1" above the eggs.
- Consider dying one set of eggs for hunting or decorating and one set for eating.
- When placing eggs to be hunted, make sure that you hide them in places away from dirt, animals, or chemicals. Try not to let the eggs sit out for more than two hours.

- When decorating, be sure to use food grade dyes. It is safe to use commercial egg dyes, liquid food coloring, fruit drink powders and fruits and vegetables to dye your eggs.
- Make sure you put your cooked or raw eggs inside of the refrigerator, not the door.

**Source:** National Food Safety Institute and North Carolina Extension Service and [www.FightBAC.org](http://www.FightBAC.org)

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