



Why are
pasteurized
shell eggs
so important
in healthcare?

The Salmonella Risk

Salmonella enteritidis (Se) is a common and sometimes lethal bacteria found inside eggs. It can not be detected by our senses and common food safety procedures do not remove the danger. Heating and cooking an egg until the yolk is hard and dry will destroy Salmonella. But cooking this way excludes many egg dishes and ruins many culinary techniques. Furthermore, greater danger exists from cross contamination that occurs when food preparers handle eggs in the kitchen.

While Salmonella can cause flu-like symptoms for the general population, seniors, children under ten, pregnant women and immune-compromised individuals are particularly vulnerable and should never to be exposed to the risk of Salmonella. These individuals are described by the FDA as a highly susceptible population.

The US Food Code

To address this risk, The US Food Code has described clear guidelines regarding the use of eggs and highly susceptible populations. The US Food Code (formerly Model Food Code) is the compilation of the best known practices in food safety and is authored by the FDA in partnership with the USDA. The 2005 Model Food Code states that raw or soft cooked eggs may not be served if the food-service establishment serves a highly susceptible population. Unfortunately, this eliminates many egg dishes and culinary techniques.

The mission of the US Food Code is to create guidelines that state and local authorities can adopt to thereby improve food safety. Individual states take the guidelines provided by the FDA and incorporate them into state law. States are constantly updating their food safety regulations and virtually every state has adopted or is in the process of adopting a recent version of the US Food Code.

Eggs and Nutrition

Egg protein is the gold standard by which all other protein sources are compared and contain virtually every nutritional component necessary in the human diet. Eggs contain hard to find nutrients like lutein for the eyes and choline which helps prevent memory loss. Even concerns about cholesterol have been reduced in recent years. Incredibly, eggs remain among the least expensive sources of protein.

Quality of Life

While it doesn't eliminate the cross contamination risk, cooking an egg until hard will kill the Salmonella bacteria. One of the advantages of liquid eggs is that they are also pasteurized. But these alternatives remove many popular dishes from menus and limit culinary techniques. Only pasteurized shell eggs can eliminate Salmonella and assure quality and menu variety. Make residents and patients happy: Serve them eggs the way they want!



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