

Keep those hands clean!

Teaching good hygiene practices can help prevent the spread of food borne illnesses as well as colds and influenza, which is easily spread through coughs and sneezes. Symptoms of influenza include a high fever, muscle aches and pains, fatigue, cough, sore throat or a runny nose. If a child has influenza they should avoid going to school.

Make sure your family washes and dries their hands:

- Before handling food and after touching raw chicken or other meats
- After using the toilet or changing nappies
- After blowing their nose or coughing into their hands
- After playing with a pet
- After gardening
- When looking after sick family members

Keep coughs and sneezes covered. Tissues are best. Put the tissue in a lined rubbish bin with a lid where possible. Encourage children to sneeze into their arm or elbow if they do not have a tissue ready to avoid the spread of germs.

Follow the NZ Foodsafe Partnership 20+20 rule:

Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water, then dry them for 20 seconds with a clean, dry towel or a paper towel.

Children could sing a favourite song such as Happy Birthday or Old McDonald that lasts about 20 seconds! Show children how to wash their hands thoroughly, washing in between fingers and the backs of their hands.

Around 119,000 cases of food borne illnesses are reported in New Zealand every year. Good hand hygiene practices have a key role to play in reducing the incidence of food borne illness. Follow these tips on food safety to help keep your family safe:

- **Clean**

Always wash knives and utensils and scrub chopping boards between preparation of raw and cooked meats.

- **Cook**

Minced meat, sausages and chicken need to be cooked until juices run clear. Do not put cooked meat on the same plate that held raw meat.

- **Cover**

Cover and store raw meats and chicken in the bottom of the fridge (to ensure juices don't drip onto other foods)

- **Chill**

Bacteria thrives at room temperature, keep food very cold or very hot. Use a chilly bin to take cold products home from the supermarket.

Stickers reminding people to wash their hands and more food safety information are available from the Community Health Information Centre, 76 Chester St East, Christchurch.

Healthy Nibbles Nutrition & physical activity information for primary schools

For more information visit: www.cph.co.nz

Canterbury

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Te Pōari Hauora o Waitaha

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