



Jeb Bush  
Governor

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Secretary, Department of Health

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**PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*Don't Cross-Contaminate*  
**Be Smart – Keep Foods Apart**

Cross-contamination is the transfer of harmful bacteria to food from other foods, cutting boards, utensils, etc., that are not handled properly. By following these simple steps, **you can prevent cross-contamination and reduce the risk of food-borne illness.**

**When Shopping:** Separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods in your grocery-shopping cart. Place these foods in plastic bags to prevent their juice from dripping onto other foods. It is also best to separate these foods from other foods at check-out and in your grocery bags.

**When Refrigerating Food:** Place raw meat, poultry and seafood in containers or sealed plastic bags to prevent their juice from dripping onto other foods. Raw juices often contain harmful bacteria. Store eggs in their original carton and refrigerate as soon as possible.

**When Preparing Food:** Wash hands and surfaces often. Harmful bacteria can spread throughout the kitchen and get onto cutting boards, utensils and counter tops. To prevent this:

- Wash hands with soap and hot water before and after handling food and after using the bathroom, changing diapers or handling pets.
- Use hot, soapy water and paper towels or clean cloths to wipe up kitchen surfaces or spills. Wash cloths often in the hot cycle of your washing machine.
- Wash cutting boards, dishes and counter tops with hot, soapy water after preparing each food item and before you go on to the next item.

**Cutting Boards:** Always use a clean cutting board. If possible, use one cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry and seafood. If a cutting board becomes excessively worn or develops hard-to-clean grooves, you should replace it.

**Marinating Food:** Always marinate food in the refrigerator, not on the counter. Sauce that is used to marinate raw meat, poultry or seafood should not be used on cooked foods, unless it is boiled just before using.

**When Serving Food:** Always use a clean plate. Never place cooked food back on the same plate or cutting board that previously held raw food.

**When Storing Leftovers:** Refrigerate or freeze leftovers within two hours or sooner in clean, shallow, covered containers to prevent harmful bacteria from multiplying.

**For more information,** visit the Pinellas County Health Department's food safety website at

[www.pinellashealth.com/EH\\_FoodHygiene.asp](http://www.pinellashealth.com/EH_FoodHygiene.asp)

- USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline: 1 (800) 535-4555 • TTY: 1 (800) 256-7072 FSIS Web site: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>
- U.S. FDA Food Information Line: 1 (888) SAFE FOOD • FDA Web site: <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/>

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