

## FACT SHEET

# EGG SAFETY & *SALMONELLA*

**A recent confirmed increase in *salmonella* cases by WA Health Authorities has been associated with foods prepared using raw and lightly cooked eggs.**

Eggs are cooking favourite, but it's important to handle and prepare them safely to reduce the risk of food poisoning.

### **About *Salmonella***

*Salmonella* is the most commonly reported bacteria responsible for foodborne illness and is usually associated with eggs and egg products.

*Salmonella* infection causes gastroenteritis (commonly known as gastro) and symptoms include headache, fever, stomach cramps, diarrhoea, nausea and vomiting which can last days or weeks.

Anyone can be affected by *Salmonella*, however young children, elderly, pregnant women and people with a weakened immune system are at a greater risk of severe illness.

### **Top tips for Egg handling**

- Avoid cracked and dirty eggs, especially when buying eggs:  
The cracks allow dirt, chicken droppings and *salmonella* bacteria into the egg. This can still be harmful even if you plan to cook the egg thoroughly.
- Don't wash your eggs:  
Washing eggs allows bacteria to move from outside of the shell to inside the egg.
- Cook your eggs until both the white and yolk are solid:  
This ensures *Salmonella* bacteria is killed.
- Store your eggs in their carton or an egg container and never leave foods containing raw eggs out of the refrigerator:  
Follow the 4-hour safety rule: throw out food if it sits above 5°C longer than 4 hours.



## Stop the bacteria spreading

- Wash your hands before and after handling eggs
- Keep eggs away from other foods when they are in their shells
- Be careful not to splash raw egg onto other foods, worktops or dishes
- Clean surfaces, dishes and utensils thoroughly with warm, soapy water after working with eggs
- Keep eggs refrigerated until required
- Use separate containers for each batch of food containing eggs
- Always refrigerate your cooked eggs and dishes containing egg if you don't eat them immediately

## Eating eggs

- Avoid any uncooked foods or dishes containing raw eggs.
- Cafes, restaurants and other food businesses can tell you if any of their meals contain raw or lightly cooked eggs.
- Commercially manufactured products containing egg products must be pasteurised, cooked or otherwise treated to make sure they don't contain *Salmonella*.
- Pasteurising eggs kills *Salmonella* bacteria without cooking it or affecting the colour, flavor, nutritional value or use of the egg.

## Separating eggs

When you split the yolk from the egg white, make sure you use a clean egg separator and not the egg shells. Using egg shells allows *Salmonella* bacteria from the shell to get into the egg. Remember to wash your hands after handling the eggs too!

## More Information

Contact the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder Environmental Health Team on 9021 9600 or email [mailbag@ckb.wa.gov.au](mailto:mailbag@ckb.wa.gov.au).

