

Food safety advice following your kidney transplant

For kidney (renal) patients



Information for patients

Sheffield Dietetics



PROUD TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SHEFFIELD TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST



Introduction

Why is food safety important?

Following your kidney transplant you will be prescribed medications called immunosuppressants. These may include Tacrolimus, Cyclosporin, Mycophenolate Mofetil, Prednisolone and Azathioprine.

Immunosuppressants help to prevent your body's immune system attacking or rejecting your new kidney by dampening down your own natural defence system. When your natural defence is weakened you are more at risk of infections, including food poisoning. This risk is greatest when you first have your transplant but is present for the lifetime of your transplant, whilst you are on immunosuppressants.

What are the symptoms of food poisoning?

Symptoms of food poisoning can vary but can include:

- High temperature
- Feeling generally unwell, including a lack of energy and weakness
- Stomach cramps and abdominal pain
- Nausea
- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting

During periods of vomiting or diarrhoea, essential medications may not be absorbed. This could potentially lead to your new kidney being rejected.

How can I prevent food poisoning?

You can reduce the risk of food poisoning by following the advice on the next few pages about handwashing, cleaning and cooking food as well as the safe storage of food.

Following good food hygiene advice will reduce the spread and transfer of the bacteria that can cause food poisoning.

Basic food safety advice should continue for the lifetime of your transplant, whilst you are on immunosuppressants, as your immune system will remain weak.

Hand washing and cleaning

- Always remember to wash your hands in warm soapy water before and after touching food.
- Wash your hands between handling raw and cooked foods.
- Cover all cuts and grazes with waterproof plasters.
- Wipe hands on a separate hand or kitchen towel. Do not use the towel used to dry dishes.
- Remember to regularly change dish cloths, sponges and towels and wash at 60°C.
- Keep kitchen surfaces and appliances clean.
- Any item that comes into contact with food should be clean.
- Keep pets and animals away from food, dishes and work surfaces.
- Prepare raw and cooked foods separately. Do not use the same knife, chopping board or utensils for raw and cooked foods.
- Where possible, try to use separate chopping boards made from scratch resistant material.
- Do not allow anyone who is ill with diarrhoea or vomiting to prepare food for you.

Cooking food

Cooking food at the right temperature and for the correct length of time will ensure that any harmful bacteria found naturally in food are killed.

- Defrost frozen foods, including meat and poultry, thoroughly before cooking unless the manufacturer's instructions state otherwise, and do not refreeze.
- You can refreeze defrosted raw food such as meat or poultry once it has been cooked.
- Follow manufacturers' instructions when cooking food. Never undercook food and ensure all food is piping hot and cooked all the way through before eating.
- Ensure that reheated food is hot all the way through and never reheat food more than once.
- When cooking meat and poultry ensure that they are well cooked through and no longer pink.
- The juices of poultry, pork and minced meat products, such as burgers and sausages, should run clear.
- Wash or peel fruit, salad and vegetables before using. Remove any bruises or spots.
- Most frozen vegetables will need to be cooked before you can eat them. If using frozen vegetables as part of a cold salad, check the instructions on the packaging first.
- Eat cooked foods within 1 hour of making.
- Keep hot food hot and cold food cold. Don't leave them standing.
- Keep leftovers in the fridge stored in sealed containers and eat within 2 days.
- Do not eat food that is past its "Use by" or "Best before" date and throw away food that has expired.

Chilling food

By chilling food properly you can stop harmful bacteria from growing.

- Keep fridges and freezers at the right temperature, between 0°C and 5°C for a fridge and -18°C or lower for a freezer.
- Bacteria usually grow in the 'Danger Zone' between 8°C and 60°C. Below 8°C, growth is stopped or slowed down.
- Try to buy frozen and chilled foods at the end of your shopping trip. Use a cool bag if there is going to be a delay in arriving home.
- Try to put food into the fridge or freezer as soon as possible.
- Do not over fill your fridge or freezer at home.
- Avoid buying food from fridges or freezers that are too full as the food may not be cold enough.
- Cool cooked food quickly (usually within 1-2 hours) and then store in the fridge or freezer. Slicing or cutting food will help to cool it more quickly.
- Defrost food in the fridge overnight or in the microwave if you intend to cook and eat it straight away.

Avoid cross contamination

Cross contamination is when bacteria is spread from food to equipment and is one of the most common causes of food poisoning.

- Keep all food covered.
- Keep any raw meats at the bottom of the fridge. Keep it covered so it is not in contact with any other cooked or ready to eat foods.
- Use different chopping boards and utensils for raw meat and ready-to-eat foods.
- Do not wash raw meat or poultry before cooking as any harmful bacteria will be destroyed by cooking. Washing could also splash harmful bacteria onto your work surfaces.
- Avoid damaged packages such as broken seals and dented tins.

Using shopping bags safely

- Keep raw and ready-to-eat foods separate in your shopping trolley or basket.
- Make sure you take enough shopping bags to pack raw and ready-to-eat food separately.
- Take extra bags to pack cleaning products and other household items separately from food.
- Label or colour code your bags to show what you intend to use them for.
- If there has been visible spillage, soiling or damage, the bag should be replaced.
- Consider using cotton or fabric bags for life as they can be put in the washing machine and cleaned.

Eating out and takeaways

Eating out or having takeaways should be avoided for the first 6 weeks after you have had your transplant. After 6 weeks follow the advice below to safely enjoy meals made or eaten out of the home.

- Check the eating area is clean and tidy.
- Avoid eating in places where there is nowhere to wash your hands.
- Avoid all high risk foods on the menu (a list of these can be found in this booklet).
- Try to order a plated meal that is cooked to order.
- Avoid foods from salad bars or deli counters and open food such as nuts on a bar.
- Ensure your meal is well cooked and piping hot all the way through when it arrives.
- Avoid cold rice and rice that has been reheated.
- Avoid buffet-style food whenever possible, but if you do eat this type of food try to be the first in the queue and do not go back for second servings as there is a risk the food may have been contaminated by other diners.

Food hygiene rating scheme

This is a rating given by the Food Standards Agency to help you choose where to eat out or shop for food by giving you clear information about the hygiene standards of the business.

It gives businesses a rating from 5 to 0 which is displayed at their premises and online so you can make more informed choices about where to buy and eat food.

- 5) Hygiene standards are very good.
- 4) Hygiene standards are good.
- 3) Hygiene standards are generally satisfactory.
- 2) Some improvement is necessary.
- 1) Major improvement is necessary.
- 0) Urgent improvement is required.

Ratings are a snapshot of the standards of food hygiene found at the time of inspection. It is the responsibility of the business to comply with food hygiene law at all times.

This includes:

- Handling of food.
- How food is stored.
- How food is prepared.
- Cleanliness of facilities.
- How food safety is managed.

Consider these ratings when choosing where to eat and whether it is a suitable and safe place.

Eating when abroad

It is recommended that you discuss any travel abroad with the transplant team. The following advice will help reduce your risk of food poisoning whilst abroad.

- Avoid tap water, ice and drinks made from tap water or fresh fruit juices. However, if tap water is to be used, boil it.
- Drink bottled or canned drinks.
- Drinks made with boiled water and served steaming hot, such as tea and coffee are usually safe.
- Avoid any foods that may have been washed in tap water, for example salad or fruits.
- Choose fruits and vegetables that can be peeled.

High risk foods

High risk foods should be avoided. Low risk foods are safer to eat.

High risk - should be avoided	Safer alternative
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unpasteurised milk, for example milk, sold on local farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any pasteurised milk, soya milk, Jersey milk or UHT milk
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All unpasteurised soft cheese unless cooked until piping hot• Homemade cheeses, for example, labneh and paneer.• All unpasteurised mould-ripened soft cheese for example, (white rind) brie, camembert and certain goats cheese like chevre• Blue-veined cheese, for example Danish Blue, dolcelatte, gorgonzola and Roquefort.• Cheeses on the deli counter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pasteurised soft cheese (check the label), for example, cottage cheese, mozzarella, feta, cream cheese, ricotta, halloumi, hard goats cheese, paneer and labneh• Processed cheeses and cheese spreads, for example, Dairylea.• All hard cheese (pasteurised and unpasteurised), for example, Cheddar, red Leicester, edam, gouda, stilton, pecorino and parmesan• Mould-ripened cheeses if cooked until piping hot• Blue-veined cheeses if cooked until piping hot• Pre-wrapped cheese

High risk - should be avoided	Safer alternative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any form of unpasteurised yoghurt • Yoghurt which is described on the label as 'bio' or 'probiotic'. For example, Onken, Yeo valley, Rachel's organic, Activia • Probiotic drinking yoghurts, for example, Yakult, Actimel, Supermarket own versions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any yoghurt that does not describe itself as 'bio' or 'probiotic' including, live, plain or natural, sour cream, Greek and fruit yoghurts (for example, Muller, supermarket own, lassi) • Prebiotic yoghurt (these contain substances which promote the growth of healthy bacteria. They do not contain any live bacteria)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice cream from ice cream vans and soft serve machines, for example, whipped ice cream • Homemade ice cream using raw eggs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shop bought tubs of ice cream stored and consumed according to manufacturer's instructions, individual ice cream portions • Homemade ice cream using pasteurised egg or an egg free recipe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raw or undercooked meat or poultry • Rotisserie chickens • Meat or poultry from deli counters • Cured meats, for example, salami, Parma ham, chorizo and pepperoni 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well cooked meat and poultry • Tinned meat • Pre-packaged cooked meats and poultry stored and used according to the manufacturer's instructions • Cured meats if cooked until piping hot
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat and vegetable pâtès 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tinned pâtès

High risk - should be avoided	Safer alternative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raw or undercooked eggs • Sauces, desserts and dressings made with raw eggs, for example, homemade mayonnaise, aioli, Caesar salad dressings, hollandaise and béarnaise sauces, chocolate mousse and egg-nog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use lion-stamped eggs and cook well • Shop bought mayonnaise • Products made with pasteurised egg
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raw or undercooked fish and shellfish, for example, sashimi, oysters and caviar • Sushi made with raw fish or shellfish • Fish and shellfish from open counters • Cold smoked fish, for example, smoked salmon and trout, ready to eat fish and shellfish unless consumed within 24 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish and shellfish if cooked until piping hot • Tinned fish • Sushi made with cooked seafood or vegetables • Pre-packaged fish and shellfish stored and used according to the manufacturer's instructions • Consume cold smoked fish or ready to eat fish including smoked salmon within 24 hours of opening the packet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwashed fruits, vegetables and salad • Raw sprouted seeds • Unpasteurised fruit juice and smoothies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash all fruit, vegetables and salad • Thoroughly cook sprouted seeds • Pasteurised fruit juice and smoothies

High risk - should be avoided	Safer alternative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready to eat sandwiches that contain high risk foods, for example, cured meat or smoked salmon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All other pre-packaged sandwiches which have been stored and consumed according to manufacturer's instructions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reheated cooked rice and rice dishes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freshly cooked rice served immediately

Please note that all transplant patients taking immunosuppressants such as Cyclosporin or Tacrolimus (Prograf) should avoid the following:

Grapefruit juice, grapefruit, starfruit, pomelo and Seville bitter orange as these can affect how your medicine works. Large quantities of Chamomile tea and Earl grey tea should also be avoided.

Please check with the nurse or doctor at the transplant clinic before taking any vitamin and mineral preparations or herbal remedies as they may affect the function of your new kidney.

Patient's name:

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Date:

This information has been given to you by:

.....

Contact number:



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