

Preventing Food-Borne Illness

Cancer patients undergoing treatment can develop a weakened immune system because most anticancer drugs decrease the body's ability to make white blood cells, the cells that fight infection. That's why cancer patients should be especially careful to avoid infections and food-borne illnesses. Here are some tips to help you prevent food-borne illness:

- Wash all raw fruits and vegetables well. If it can't be well washed (as with raspberries), avoid it. Scrub rough surfaces, like the skin of melons, prior to cutting.
- Carefully wash your hands and food preparation surfaces (knives, cutting boards) before and after preparing food, especially after handling raw meat.
- Thaw meat in the refrigerator, not on the kitchen counter.
- Be sure to cook meat and eggs thoroughly.
- Avoid raw shellfish and use only pasteurized or processed ciders and juices and pasteurized milk and cheese.