Use common sense in food handling

Food safety is the responsibility of all involved. “While the authorities continue to vigilantly work to ensure that the majority of the food safety standards are met, the food industry and consumers need to step up as well,” said a spokesman for the Singapore Food Agency.

Leong said food establishment owners were trained in food hygiene and training is a strict requirement for food preparation. But, she added, with the extremely long working hours, there is a chance some staff may not have received adequate training.

When it comes to education, it is also important for people and businesses, including the public who are the ultimate consumers of food, to make sure they are educated in proper food hygiene.

The Singapore Food Agency is the body responsible for ensuring food safety, said Leong. “What’s food poisoning, or even a foodborne illness, is the right food ingredient for the wrong bacteria to overgrow.”

When the temperature cools, spores that can cause illness are killed. “So that means you can use the food as you would normally do,” she said.

But if people are not able to eat the food within a certain amount of time, they can freeze it. “We’ve had lots of cases where people eat food that has been left to sit out on tables for several hours before consumption would not make the food safe to consume,” she said.

Many people think that heat as well as cold temperatures will keep food safe, but that is not always the case.

A common example is the idea that leftovers are safe to eat once they are heated. However, as bacteria multiply at temperatures between 50 and 60 degrees Celsius, leftover food that has been kept hot for only a few minutes may contain a lot of bacteria.

Even buying meat may be a tricky job. “While the bacteria in raw meat may be killed by the fridge for a few long minutes, it may not be killed by the typical kitchen temperatures,” she said.

Many people also think that because the fridge is cold enough, some toxic bacteria are “killed.” And, while that may be true, Dr Leong said, “There are species of bacteria that can grow and form toxins, said Dr Leong. “I can’t cook it.”

When the temperature cools, spores grow and form toxins, said Dr Leong. “I don’t like leftovers.” The repeated heating and cooling of food allows the introduction of harmful bacteria to the food. If the food is heated well, then there is a higher chance for the bacteria to become active again.

There are many risk factors for cancer: genetic makeup and lifestyle. Some factors that can increase the risk of breast cancer include:

- Age: The risk increases with age.
- Family history: Women with a family history of breast cancer have a higher risk.
- Hormonal factors: Women who take hormones, such as estrogen and progesterone, for conditions like menopause or to treat certain cancers, have a higher risk of breast cancer.
- Overweight or obesity: Women who are overweight or obese are at higher risk of breast cancer.
- Early menarche (starting menstruation at a young age) and late menopause (reaching menopause after the age of 55).
- Having never had children or waiting until late to have children.
- Never breastfeeding or breastfeeding for less than 12 months.
- LARC (long-acting reversible contraception) use.
- Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) use.
- Radiation exposure.
- Hormone therapy (HT) use.

Some factors that can decrease the risk of breast cancer include:

- Exercise: Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of breast cancer.
- Limiting alcohol intake: Drinking alcohol can increase the risk of breast cancer.
- Healthy diet: A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can reduce the risk of breast cancer.
- Not smoking: Smoking can increase the risk of breast cancer.
- Weight management: Maintaining a healthy weight can lower the risk of breast cancer.
- Hormonal therapy (HT) use: Using hormone therapy can increase the risk of breast cancer.

The-Straits-Times-Newspaper

Watch out for the ‘danger zone’

Bacteria grow most quickly in temperatures between 50 and 60 deg C. This is often called the ‘danger zone’. Because the temperature isn’t high enough, some toxins are heat-tolerant and can cause illness.

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