

Grades 6–8

Food safety

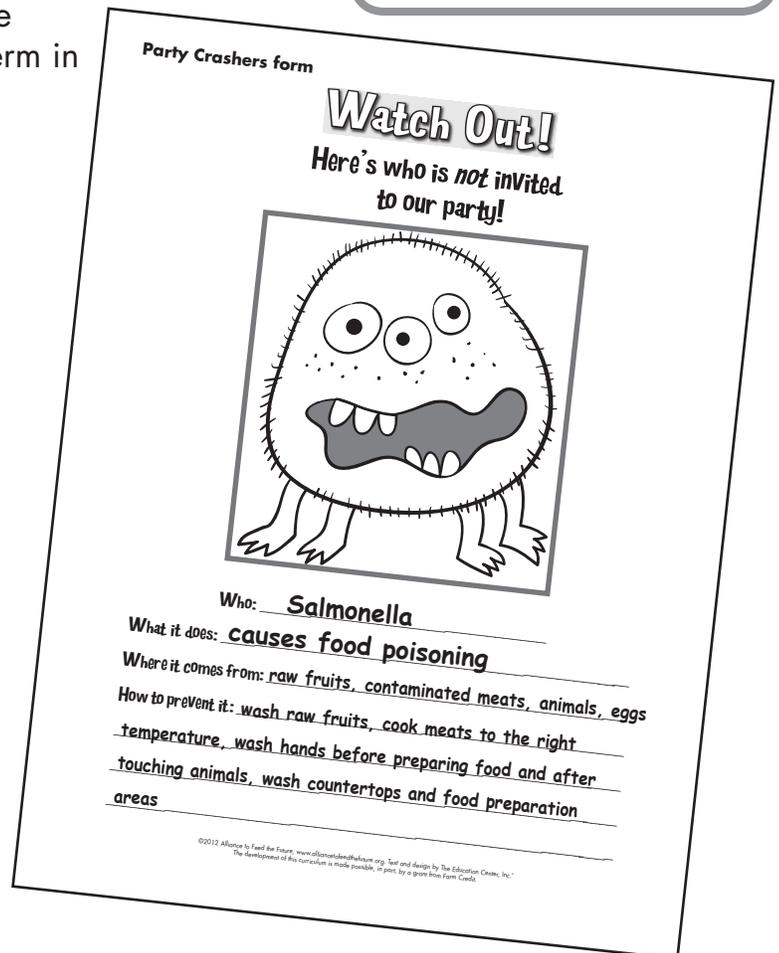
Party Crashers

Reading for details, identifying food safety details

Everyone loves a party. With this simple activity, students will learn about a few unwelcome party guests—*E. coli*, *Salmonella*, and *Listeria*. Explain to students that a *pathogen* is a microorganism that causes a disease. Share the basic facts below about these pathogens, along with the food safety tips that apply to foods. Then distribute a copy of the “Party Crashers” form and art supplies and ask each student to choose one of the pathogens and make a poster warning others to watch out for this germ. Be sure the student includes the basic facts about the germ in her poster.

Did you know?

In 1795, the French government offered 12,000 francs to anyone who could invent a method of preserving food. Napoleon’s soldiers were suffering more from hunger than combat. A Parisian named Nicholas Appert came up with the idea of canning food and spent 15 years perfecting it. He was awarded the prize in 1810 by Napoleon himself.



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E. coli

- Found in raw meat and poultry, unpasteurized milk, soft cheese made from unpasteurized milk, raw fruits and vegetables, and even contaminated water.
- Also can be picked up by not washing your hands after touching a contaminated object.
- Incubation period (the time between when you're exposed to the bacteria and when illness strikes): 1–10 days
- Length of illness: 5–10 days

Salmonella

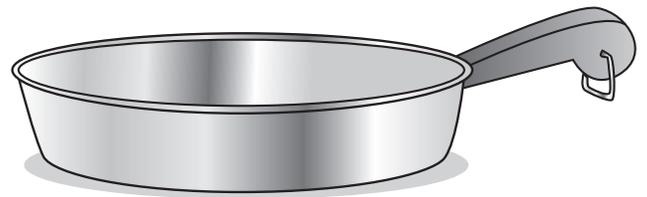
- One of the most common causes of food poisoning
- Found in eggs, poultry, meat, unpasteurized milk or juice, cheese, contaminated raw fruits and vegetables, spices, and nuts
- Also can be found on household pets, particularly snakes, turtles, lizards, frogs, and birds, and items the animal has touched
- Incubation period (the time between when you're exposed to the bacteria and when illness strikes): 12–72 hours
- Length of illness: 4–7 days

Listeria

- Prime sources: unpasteurized milk, raw sprouts, unpasteurized cheese (includes some but not all queso fresco, feta, brie, and camembert), deli meats, hot dogs
- Grows even in cold temperatures and in the refrigerator. *Listeria* can only be killed by proper cooking and pasteurization.
- Incubation period (the time between when you're exposed to the bacteria and when illness strikes): 3–70 days
- Length of illness: several days or even weeks. Pregnant women and the elderly are most vulnerable.

Prevention for all:

- Remember: clean, separate, cook, chill. Clean your hands and work surfaces often. Separate uncooked and cooked foods. Cook foods to proper temperatures. Chill foods promptly.
- Never eat undercooked meat, poultry or eggs; unpasteurized milk or juice; soft cheese made from unpasteurized milk; or spices or nuts that may have been contaminated.
- Use a food thermometer to make sure foods are cooked fully (145° F for roasts, chops, and steaks; 160° F for ground beef; 165° F for poultry).
- Rinse raw produce thoroughly before eating.
- Keep food refrigerated before cooking.
- Clean all food preparation surfaces, plates, and utensils.
- Wash your hands with hot, soapy water before preparing food.
- Never use the same utensils or dishes to handle raw foods and cooked foods.
- Never let foods sit out for over two hours after they are prepared. Always keep hot foods hot (over 140° F) and cold foods cold (40° F or under).
- Always throw away food that's past its expiration date.
- Never eat food that doesn't look or smell right.
- Wash your hands after coming in contact with household pets.
- Consult a physician if you think you have a foodborne illness to discuss possible treatment.
- For more information, visit the Partnership for Food Safety Education website, www.fightbac.org



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Watch Out!

Here's who is *not* invited
to our party!



Who: _____

What it does: _____

Where it comes from: _____

How to prevent it: _____
