



Enjoy eggs safely

Eggs are a good meal choice

Eggs are a nutritious food high in protein and essential vitamins, yet low in saturated fats. They are a delicious food and play an important part in people's diet. Like any fresh perishable food they need to be handled, stored and cooked correctly or they can make people ill.

Avoid cracked and dirty eggs

Most shell eggs in Australia are clean and free from bacteria but sometimes harmful bacteria can be found:

- on the egg, which is more likely if the shell is dirty with dirt, chicken poo or feathers stuck to the outside, or

- inside the egg, which is more likely if the shell is cracked. Some cracks are obvious but even hairline cracks where the shell looks intact can be a problem.

If an egg is cracked or dirty throw it out. Never wash an egg. When wet, the shell becomes more porous making it easier for bugs to get in.

Raw eggs can be higher risk

Cooking kills most harmful bugs. Uncooked food that contains raw egg such as hollandaise sauce, egg mayonnaise, raw egg milkshakes or Asian pork rolls among other foods are a higher risk.

Keep eggs cold

- keep eggs in the fridge after purchase
- keep eggs in their carton
- don't eat food meant to be stored in the fridge if left out for more than 2 hours

Keep it clean

- discard cracked or dirty eggs
- keep hands, surfaces and utensils clean and dry before and after handling eggs
- separate whites from yolks using an egg separator, not the shell

Eggs need care

- don't serve foods containing raw eggs to children under 2 years, pregnant women, people over 65 and those with serious illness
- to minimise risk, cook eggs until the white is completely firm and yolks begin to thicken



Salmonella can affect anyone, but for children younger than two years, pregnant women, people over 65 and anyone with serious illness, it can be more dangerous because:

- immune systems are weaker
- the impact of symptoms can be more severe
- stomachs have less acid to protect against bugs, and
- recovery takes longer.

Use recipes where eggs are cooked. Consider using products with pasteurised egg ingredients such as commercial mayonnaise.

Check the date

It is important to use eggs before the date on the pack has passed.

The date on the pack usually assumes you are storing your eggs in the fridge. Eggs can age more in a day at room temperature than a week in the fridge.

Keeping eggs in the fridge also minimises the risk of *Salmonella* growing. Check the temperature of your fridge is 5°C or below. Keep eggs in their carton in the middle of the fridge. Do not keep them in the door where it's warmer.

The recommended date is usually located on the egg carton. If you take your eggs out of the carton you won't know when the date has passed.

How to choose the good egg

Check:

1. eggs are clean and free from visible dirt and feathers
2. shells are not cracked
3. eggs are within the recommended date on the pack
4. eggs have not been stored in sunlight

About the NSW Food Authority

The NSW Food Authority is the government organisation that helps ensure NSW food is safe and correctly labelled.

It works with consumers, industry and other government organisations to minimise food poisoning by providing information about and regulating the safe production, storage, transport, promotion and preparation of food.

More information

For more information about egg safety:

- visit www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/eggs
- phone the helpline on 1300 552 406