

Are you having a holiday gathering and planning on serving your favorite traditional "eggnog" recipe?

If this recipe or other recipes in your file use raw or lightly-cooked eggs you will want to update these recipes to avoid the risk of foodborne illness. That's because we now know that refrigerated grade A eggs with clean, uncracked shells — those usually assumed to be safe — can be contaminated with Salmonella enteritidis bacteria.

Scientists strongly suspect that bacteria can be transmitted from infected laying hens directly into the interior of the eggs before the shells are formed.

Many government agencies are doing research on the problem, which is a worldwide epidemic. The problem is greater in Europe due to a more virulent strain of the bacteria called "phage type 4," which has not been found in U.S. poultry production.

Eggs must be cooked thoroughly in order to kill any bacteria such as salmonella — that may be present. If your eggnog recipe calls for raw eggs, it's not safe. Likewise, neither is Hollandaise sauce or mousse. Don't worry about cakes, cookies and candies though. Eggs used in baking get thoroughly cooked, and candy (such as divinity) containing eggs reaches temperatures far above that needed to kill bacteria. However, raw cookie dough isn't safe to eat!

But back to eggnog - way back. For centuries, our English ancestors made a similar milk and egg beverage that was cooked and served warm. Named for a small drinking vessel known as a "noggin," eggnog was often served in colonial times to colonists who were "under the weather."

Today it is a popular holiday drink made with raw eggs and served chilled, sometimes with spirits added. While adding alcohol may inhibit bacterial growth, it cannot be relied upon to kill bacteria which may be present in raw

To make safe eggnog, cook or microwave it to 160 degrees F, or until the egg mixture thickens enough to coat a spoon (see the following recipe). Refrigerate it at once. When refrigerating a large amount of eggnog, divide it into several shallow containers so that it will cool quickly.

Do not fold raw, beaten egg whites into the cooked mixture. It hasn't been proven that raw egg whites are free of salmonella bacteria. Commercial eggnog is prepared with pasteurized eggs and requires no cooking. Eggnog made with egg substitutes is also safe since these frozen commercial products have been pasteurized.

Hollandaise sauce and chocolate mousse are usually made with raw eggs. Update these recipes for safety's sake. A safe Hollandaise sauce can be made with egg substitutes and margarine. This version has the added bonus of containing no cholesterol. When making chocolate mousse, melt the chocolate with the liquid called for in the recipe, add the eggs and continue to heat gently until the mixture reaches the safe temperature of 160 degrees F.

Holidays are a fun but hectic time. By egg-proofing your recipes for safety, you'll have one less thing to worry about.

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Holiday Eggnog 1 quart two percent milk

6 eggs

¼ teaspoon salt

1/2 cup sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 cup whipping cream, whipped ground nutmeg

Heat milk in large saucepan until hot (do not boil or scald). While milk is heating, beat together eggs and salt in a large bowl, gradually adding the sugar. Gradually add the hot milk mixture to the egg mixture. Transfer the mixture back to the large saucepan and cook on mediumlow heat. Stir constantly with a whisk until the mixture thickens and just coats a spoon. Thermometer should register 160 degrees F. Stir in vanilla. Cool quickly by setting pan in a bowl of ice or cold water and stirring for about 10 minutes. Cover and refrigerate until thoroughly chilled, several hours or overnight. Pour into a bowl or pitcher. Fold in whipped cream and dust with ground nutmeg. Calories 135 per ½ cup; cholesterol: 120 mg. per 1/2 cup. Yield: 2 quarts

Low-Cholesterol Eggnog

½ cup egg substitute 2 teaspoons sugar

1 can (13 oz.) evaporated skim milk

% cup skim milk

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 teaspoon rum flavoring (optional)

ground nutmeg

Whip egg substitute and sugar together and combine with two types of milk and flavoring. Mix well. Chill overnight. Dust with nutmeg before serving. Calories: 96 per ½ cup; cholesterol: 4 mg. per 1/2 cup. Yield: 3 cups

Source: From the New American Diet - William Connor, M.D. and Sonja Connor, R.D. Simon and Schuster. N.Y., 1986.

Family Traditions

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)—Family traditions are those dozens, even hundreds, of little rituals unique to each family during the holidays as well as yearround. Special foods, games, activities, stories, decorations, parties, religious celebrations and get-togethers with family and friends come to mind when one thinks of celebrating family traditions.

Traditions help to build family bonds and give family members a feeling of belonging, support and caring. They contribute to the strength of each family member and help to make families unique. Traditions are especially important to young children who are just beginning to understand who they are. Cultural and ethnic traditions can preserve the special attributes of families and can help members to feel "in touch" with their

All families have traditions, even if they think they don't. Traditions can include anything from eating meals together, attending religious services and celebrating birthdays, to enjoying a special story time or even cleaning together.

Here are several ideas for family traditions to enjoy this holiday season:

·Hold an "I Remember When..." session during the holiday season with as many extended family members as possible. Recall with each other significant events that have been meaningful to family members.

·Make a family tablecloth each year to be used at dinnertime or at special family outings. Use a plain white cloth sheet and let family members draw or paint designs on it and sign their name. You may wish to design a "family emblem" or motto to draw on your tablecloth.

 Make it a family tradition each holiday season to bake cookies to give to mail and newspaper carriers, sanitation workers and other service providers. Youngsters will enjoy learning about the spirit of

•Hang a family bulletin board in your kitchen, family room or hallway. Each family member can have his or her own section to share achievements, talents, messages or snapshots. Create a special seasonal display for important holidays.





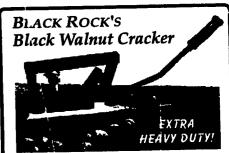
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