



A Holiday Wish and a New Year's Resolution from Stop Foodborne Illness

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It is important for everyday people to be knowledgeable about foodborne illness—what it is, where it comes from, how to maintain a food-safe household and how to be a smart food shopper.

As the season of “comfort and joy” approaches, Stop Foodborne Illness (www.stopfoodborneillness.org), a national, nonprofit, public health organization dedicated to preventing illness and death from foodborne pathogens, has one holiday wish—that you make this important New Year's resolution:

“I will learn more about food safety so I can prevent my family and friends from being victims of foodborne illness.”

Foodborne illness is no joke, as can be witnessed by the recent nationwide ban on Romaine lettuce issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Harmful pathogens have become an ever-increasing threat in our food supply, causing serious illness and even death among people with weaker immune systems such as young children and older adults. In 2011, the CDC [estimated](#) that each year, roughly 1 in 6 Americans (or 48 million people) gets sick, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die of foodborne illness.

The facts are staggering: As of November 28, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued [approximately 95 food recalls, market withdrawals and safety alerts](#) involving foodborne illness during 2018. That is almost 2 per week, and many have affected people in multiple states.

You may be surprised to learn that the [FDA's list](#) includes products from nearly all food categories! In fact, we're going to list them here: tahini, breakfast cereal, cheese, asparagus, cake mix, pistachios, veggie sandwiches, twice-baked potatoes, ice cream, ham

rolls, biscuits, rolls, salads, subs, ham, macadamia nuts, cage free eggs, dry whey powder, bread, crackers, cracker sandwiches, pasta salad, poke kits, sprouting mix, vegetable trays, fresh melons, frozen broccoli, frozen whole tilapia fish, fruit mix, organic nut mix, wild Coho smoked salmon, microgreen mixes, ice pops, smoked salmon spread, romaine lettuce, eggs, organic amaranth flour, coconut, pastries, coconut flour, nutritional yeast, pumpkin seeds, deli products, alfalfa sprouts, chia seeds, cardamom pods, pork, bison, cream cheese, and frozen green beans and mixed vegetables.

If you're a pet owner, you should also know that the FDA's list also includes [25 pathogen-related dog and cat food recalls and alerts in 2018](#). Many of these items were of the "raw" variety. Foodborne illness in pets can be just as serious and life-threatening.

"We must attack foodborne illness on many fronts and in many ways," said Lauren Bush, board co-chair of Stop Foodborne Illness. "Producers, retailers and consumers must be more vigilant than ever in identifying and preventing harmful pathogens in our food supply. We cannot stress enough how important it is for everyday people to be knowledgeable about foodborne illness—what it is, where it comes from, how to maintain a food-safe household and how to be a smart food shopper."

"At the food industry level, food safety organizations such as Stop, trade associations, food producers and government agencies are working harder than ever to encourage safe food policies and practices at all levels, but certainly much more can be done," said Michael Taylor, Stop Foodborne Illness board co-chair and former FDA Deputy Commissioner for Foods and Veterinary Medicine. "We must all be committed to very high food safety standards and make sure those standards are enforced through the food chain."

A DOZEN THINGS YOU CAN DO TO BE SMART ABOUT FOODBORNE ILLNESS IN 2019

As Stop's holiday gift to you, here are ten things you can do to be knowledgeable about foodborne illness and help keep your family safe.

1. **Sign up to get free email alerts** when food recalls are declared. Stop Foodborne Illness regularly posts information about new food recalls: <http://www.stopfoodborneillness.org/take-action/sign-up-for-e-alerts/>
2. **Learn what foodborne illness is:** <http://www.stopfoodborneillness.org/awareness/common-questions-about-foodborne-illness-2/>
3. **Learn about common foodborne pathogens:** <http://www.stopfoodborneillness.org/awareness/pathogens/>
4. **Learn about symptoms, causes and treatments:** <http://www.stopfoodborneillness.org/awareness/what-is-foodborne-illness/>
5. **Learn about others' experiences:** <http://www.stopfoodborneillness.org/stories/>.
6. **Learn how to cook safely** and kill harmful pathogens before they reach the dinner table: <http://www.stopfoodborneillness.org/awareness/safe-cooking-temperatures-2/>
7. **Learn how to maintain a food-safe kitchen:** https://www.newsline360.com/stopfoodborneillness/pr_view/6347?&&hlan=cross+contamination

8. **Encourage your school district to teach children about foodborne illness:**<http://www.stopfoodborneillness.org/awareness/teacher-resources/>
9. **Know who to contact if you or your family members contract foodborne illness.** If it is [serious](#), don't be shy—call 9-1-1. When you visit your doctor or clinic, make sure you encourage them to consider a foodborne pathogen as the cause of the symptoms.
10. **Learn more about food safety resources available in your state:** <http://www.stopfoodborneillness.org/awareness/food-safety-by-state/>
11. **Learn how to shop safely at farmers markets:** https://www.newsline360.com/stopfoodborneillness/pr_view/6306?&&hlan=farmers+markets
12. **Learn how to pack food-safe school lunches:** https://www.newsline360.com/stopfoodborneillness/pr_view/6397?&&hlan=school+lunch

Help make others smarter about food safety! We encourage you to share your own foodborne illness story: <http://www.stopfoodborneillness.org/take-action/share-your-foodborne-illness-story/>. Your story may help others avoid being a victim and provide much needed moral support to [those experiencing the same things](#).

May you and yours enjoy a happy, safe and healthy holiday season and New Year!

Stop Foodborne Illness Is Here to Help You

Stop Foodborne Illness is a national, nonprofit, public health organization dedicated to preventing illness and death from foodborne pathogens by promoting sound food safety policy and best practices, building public awareness and assisting those impacted by foodborne illness. For more food safety tips please visit www.stopfoodborneillness.org/awareness/. If you think you have been sickened from food, [check this out](#) and contact your local health professional.

For questions and personal assistance, please contact Stop Foodborne Illness' Community Coordinator, Stanley Rutledge, at srutledge@stopfoodborneillness.org or 773-269-6555 x7. To donate to Stop, visit [here](#).

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