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### **ENJOY EGG HUNTING WITHOUT THE RISK OF FOOD-BORNE ILLNESS**

Raw eggs, just like raw meat, poultry, and fish can easily be a source of foodborne illness. For safe consumption, eggs must be properly handled, promptly refrigerated, and thoroughly cooked. So, if planning to celebrate Easter with Easter Eggs, the Division of Environmental Health of the Department of Public Health is encouraging everyone to keep food safety in mind during the festivity.

The Division promotes the use of plastic eggs instead of actual eggs during Easter Egg hunt activities to prevent the possibility of food-borne illness from occurring; however, if deciding to use real eggs, the following are recommendations that should be followed:

1. Always purchase eggs from a refrigerated case. Choose clean eggs, and make sure the shells are not cracked.
2. Prevent cross contamination by separating eggs from other foods in your grocery cart, grocery bags, and the refrigerator. Keep the eggs in the coldest part of the refrigerator (45°F below).
3. Prevent the spread of germs by washing your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds before handling eggs at every preparation step, including cooking, cooling, dyeing, and hiding.
4. When you cook the eggs, make sure the water is hot (185°F - 190°F) and simmer for at least a minimum of 12 minutes. Cool the eggs in cool water or simply air dry.
5. Keep hard-boiled Easter eggs refrigerated until just before the hunt. Hard-boiled eggs should be refrigerated within two hours of cooking and used within one week.
6. Do not hide eggs in places where they might come in contact with pets, wild animals, birds, or lawn chemicals.
7. Throw away Easter eggs which are cracked, dirty or soiled, and Easter eggs that have been kept out from the refrigerator for more than two hours.

Enjoy egg hunting without the risk of food-borne illness. For more information, please call the Division of Environmental Health at 735-7221.



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