

# CHICKEN ABOUT EATING POULTRY?

**Properly cooking and handling your food is the answer.**



## **With all the talk of avian flu, are you afraid to eat chicken?**

Thinking of passing up omelettes or scrambled eggs because they might make you sick? The U.S. Department of Agriculture says you can put those worries aside: As long as poultry and eggs are properly handled and cooked, they're still safe to eat. We just need to take a common-sense approach to preparing food.

While the deadly type of avian flu that is a potential threat to humans has never been detected in U.S. poultry, properly cooking and handling your chicken, turkey or duck would kill the virus before it reaches your table, according to USDA.

The best way to be sure your food is safe is by using a meat thermometer to make sure your chicken is cooked all the way through.



The inside of your chicken should be at a temperature of at least 165 degrees throughout to kill foodborne germs that might be present, including salmonella, E. coli and influenza.

It's never a good idea to eat raw eggs, or food with raw egg ingredients such as cookie dough or cake batter (as tempting as it may be!). Play it safe by thoroughly cooking all dishes with raw eggs.

**Here are some other helpful tips from USDA:**

- ▷ Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds (equal to singing the "Happy Birthday" song all the way through twice) before and after handling food.
- ▷ Prevent the cross-contamination of foods by keeping raw meat, poultry, fish and their juices away from other items.
- ▷ After cutting raw meats, wash your cutting board, knife and counter tops with hot, soapy water.
- ▷ Sanitize cutting boards by using a solution of 1 teaspoon chlorine bleach in 1 quart of water.

**For more tips, read the USDA's helpful brochure on avian flu or ask questions online via the USDA Web site. BON APPETIT!**