Home Food Safety Mythbusters
September is National Food Safety Education Month!
Myth or Fact?
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Lemon juice and salt will clean and sanitize a cutting board.
Putting chicken in a colander and rinsing it with water will remove bacteria like *Salmonella*. 
Once a hamburger turns brown in the middle, it is cooked.
You should not put hot food in the refrigerator.
**MYTH:** Lemon juice and salt will clean and sanitize a cutting board.

**Fact:** Sanitizing is the process of reducing the number of microorganisms that are on a properly cleaned surface to a safe level to reduce risk of foodborne illness. Lemon juice and salt will not do this. The most effective way to sanitize a cutting board as well as other kitchen surfaces is with a diluted bleach and water solution.

To clean and sanitize your cutting board first wash it with hot water and soap. Then sanitize it by using a diluted chlorine bleach solution -- just 1 T. unscented liquid bleach (not more) to 1 gallon of water. Let the bleach solution stand on the surface for a few minutes; then rinse and blot dry with clean paper towels. It is important to clean and disinfect -- just because a surface looks clean, doesn’t mean it is free of disease-causing bacteria!

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**CLEAN-** Wash hands and surfaces often.

Bacteria can spread throughout the kitchen and get on hands, cutting boards, knives, and countertops. Frequent cleaning can keep that from happening.
**MYTH:** Putting chicken in a colander and rinsing it with water will remove bacteria like salmonella.

**FACT:** Rinsing poultry in a colander will not remove bacteria. In fact, it can spread raw juices around your sink, onto your countertops, and onto ready-to-eat foods. Bacteria in raw meat and poultry can only be killed when cooked to a safe internal temperature, which for poultry is 165° F, as measured with a food thermometer. Save yourself the messiness of rinsing raw poultry. It is not a safety step and can cause cross-contamination!

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**SEPARATE - Don't cross-contaminate!**

Cross-contamination is how bacteria spreads. Keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood and their juices away from ready-to-eat foods.
**MYTH:** Once a hamburger turns brown in the middle it is cooked to a safe internal temperature.

**FACT:** You cannot use visual cues to determine whether food has been cooked to a safe internal temperature. The ONLY way to know that food has been cooked to a safe internal temperature is to use a food thermometer. Ground meat should be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 160° F, as measured by a food thermometer.

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**COOK** -- Cook to proper temperature as measured with a food thermometer. Even for experienced cooks, the improper heating and preparation of food means bacteria can survive.
**MYTH:** You should not put hot food in the refrigerator.

**FACT:** Hot food can be placed directly in the refrigerator. A large pot of food like soup or stew should be divided into small portions and put in shallow containers for quicker cooling in the refrigerator. If you leave food out to cool and forget about it then toss it! Food is not safe to eat after sitting out at room temperature for more than two hours. Bacteria grow rapidly in the "danger zone" between 40° F & 140° F. Always follow the “two hour rule” - refrigerate perishable foods within two hours at a refrigerator temperature of 40° F or below. And if left out in a room or outdoors where the temperature is 90° F or hotter, food should be refrigerated or discarded within just 1 hour.

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**CHILL--Refrigerate promptly**

Bacteria spreads fastest at temperatures between 40° F and 140° F, so chilling food properly is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of foodborne illness.
Lift for Answer
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