

“Many Foods are good

for longer”



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Things to take to heart when it comes to kitchen hygiene: an interview with Dr Niels Bandick.

Mr Bandick, what are the most common hygiene mistakes made in domestic kitchens and how can they be avoided?

Consuming raw or insufficiently cooked foods of animal origin such as meat, eggs, or innards and especially chicken, poses the greatest risk. They may be contaminated with illness-causing microorganisms which can enter into the body. It can also happen when bacteria from contaminated meat are transferred to uncooked foods such as salads. Therefore, animal food products should always be prepared with separate kitchen utensils, surfaces such as cutting boards and counters should be cleaned thoroughly, and hands should be washed regularly. Better hygiene means fewer foodborne infections.

What else should be kept in mind?

Easily perishable foods should be properly refrigerated. After grocery shopping, the cold chain should not be broken. To start, they should be transported in insulated bags when temperatures are particularly high. The refrigerator should be cold enough. This is not a place to be stingy. We recommend a maximum temperature of seven degrees centigrade.

What about the expiration date on packaged foods?

Here, we have to make a distinction. Products have either a “best before” date or a use-by date. The “best before” date is far more common. This denotes the time period for which the manufacturer guarantees the shelf life of the product. But many foods are good for longer, particularly those in sealed packaging. Dairy products such as

yoghurt and cheese come to mind here. In these cases, the consumer can examine the appearance, smell, and taste of the product to determine whether or not they still wish to eat the food. This is different from the use-by date, which is provided for packaged, quickly perishable foods such as raw poultry or ground meat. This denotes the specific date by which a product should be consumed and it should not be exceeded.

How should one deal with mould?

Mould should be fundamentally avoided. On the one hand, mould forms poisonous substances and on the other hand, inhaling mould spores is hazardous to health. So dispose of mouldy foods like bread. Containers in which these foods are stored should also be thoroughly cleaned. There are a few exceptions such as some hard cheeses in which the fungi do not spread to the inside of the cheese. But anyone who isn't an expert should err on the side of caution. —

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DR NIELS BANDICK