

## DON'T EAT THE DOUGH?



Dreamtime / TNS

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is once again reminding families not to eat raw cookie dough.

■ Some medical experts point out that using pasteurized eggs, rather than regular eggs, can reduce the risk of salmonella infection from raw dough

By Lindsey Bever  
The Washington Post

The Christmas cookies are in the oven; the mixing bowl, which is still coated with the sugary sweet dough, is calling your name.

Don't listen to it, health experts warn. Or some of them do, at least.

With holiday baking season underway, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is urging people not to eat unbaked cookie dough — not even a tiny taste — because “unbaked products that are intended to be cooked, such as dough or batter, can make you sick.”

“Say No to Raw Dough!” the CDC warns.

### What's the big deal?

The potential problem is with two primary ingredients.

Raw flour can be contami-

nated with *Escherichia coli* (aka *E. coli*), and raw eggs have been a known carrier of salmonella bacteria.

Both bacteria are killed in the cooking process, but contaminated food that is not cooked or is undercooked has been known to make people ill, according to the CDC.

“When you're making cookies, often the recipe calls for raw eggs,” Lindsay Malone, a registered dietitian with the Cleveland Clinic, said in 2016. “Whenever you consume raw eggs, you increase your risk of salmonella poisoning.” Malone added that “when there's a risk for salmonella, you really want to be cautious and take steps to avoid it as much as possible.”

In recent years, public health experts have become vocal about raw flour, too.

The CDC reported that in

*“When there's a risk for salmonella, you really want to be cautious and take steps to avoid it as much as possible.”*

— Lindsay Malone, registered dietitian

2016, more than 60 people across the United States were sickened with *E. coli* from raw flour.

According to an alert from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, that means no taste-testing batter or dough — not for cookies, cakes, pies or even bread and pizza crust.

In addition, the CDC said, children should not be permitted to play with dough because they can get sick simply from handling it.

The health agency sounds the alarm about eating raw cookie dough every year

*“When my kids and I make cookie dough, we never use regular eggs. Instead, we use eggs that have been pasteurized.”*

— Brian Zikmund-Fisher, professor, University of Michigan

around this time, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection typically echoes the CDC.

### Too 'rare' to care?

However, not all public health experts agree that raw cookie dough is dangerous.

Brian Zikmund-Fisher, associate professor of Health Behavior and Health Education at University of Michigan, wrote in the Conversation in 2016 that his family eats raw cookie dough

“regularly.”

“To start, when most people think about health risks and cookie dough, they think about raw egg. Eggs can be contaminated with salmonella bacteria, and food safety recommendations encourage people to cook eggs until the white and yolk are firm in order to kill any bacteria,” Zikmund-Fisher wrote. “Because of this concern, when my kids and I make cookie dough, we never use regular eggs. Instead, we use eggs that have been pasteurized to kill any harmful bacteria without actually cooking the egg itself. (A great public health innovation, if you ask me!) So, I wasn't worried about the eggs in the cookie dough.”

On raw flour, he said that contamination is “rare.”

Symptoms from *E. coli* infection typically appear within several days and

may include severe stomach pain, diarrhea and vomiting; symptoms of a salmonella infection are similar but may also include a fever, according to the CDC. With both illnesses, patients usually recover within less than a week, according to the agency.

To avoid potential infection, the CDC suggests not eating raw cookie dough or cake batter, of course, but also not making homemade ice cream or milkshakes with the uncooked ingredients. (However, according to the FDA, commercial cookie dough ice cream is typically safe because it is made with treated flour and pasteurized eggs.) The CDC also urges people to thoroughly wash their hands with warm, soapy water and to clean all work surfaces, dishes and utensils when working with raw eggs and flour.

## Spices could be source of lead contamination

By Mari A. Schaefer  
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Paint chips in older homes, contaminated soil and water pumped through lead pipes are all known sources of lead exposure for children. Now, you might add to that list spices such as turmeric, chili powder and vanilla.

In a small study, researchers in North Carolina found lead contamination in spices, herbal remedies and ceremonial powders in the homes of children with elevated blood lead levels, according to a report from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The food items that had the highest levels of lead in the study included samples of chili powder/red pepper,

cumin, coriander, anise, turmeric and vanilla.

For children, there is no safe blood lead level. Even low levels of lead poisoning can affect IQ, the ability to pay attention and academic achievement.

Nor are adults immune from the adverse effects associated with lead contamination. Health problems include reproductive issues for both men and women, high blood pressure, nerve disorders, memory and concentration problems, and muscle and joint pain, according to the CDC.

In the United States, there is no national limit for lead contamination in spices. The Food and Drug Administration has set a limit for lead

in natural-source food-color additives like paprika, saffron and turmeric at 10 milligrams per kilogram. For products that children will eat, such as candy, the limit is 0.1 mg/kg.

“However, spices are not considered food intended for consumption by children,” the researchers state.

Nationally, the number of cases of elevated blood lead levels in children has been decreasing. But in one North Carolina county, there was a small increase, from 27 reported cases of elevated blood lead levels in 2013 to 44 cases in 2017.

Lead investigations were conducted at 983 homes in North Carolina from January 2011 to January

2018, with 61 children in 59 properties included in the final report.

The majority of the children lived in new homes, which lessened the likelihood paint chips were a culprit — 42 homes were built after 1978, when lead-based paints were banned in the U.S. Brass objects, jewelry, cookware and other consumer items that might have contained lead were found in 10 of the homes.

In 32 of the homes, there was no evidence of lead in paint, dust, mini-blinds, faucets, bathtub glaze or furniture finish. But in seven of the homes, the researchers found that the collected samples of spices, herbal remedies and ceremonial

powders (nonfood products used for social or religious markings) — which children might accidentally ingest — contained high levels of lead.

According to an earlier national survey of Americans' eating habits by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, estimates for the amount of spices consumed by children are low. However, those amounts may differ for children whose parents emigrated from Southeast Asia, where spices are used more often in cooking.

About 95 percent of the spices consumed in the U.S. are imported and often grown in countries polluted by leaded gasoline, smelt-

ers, battery-manufacturing plants and mines. In addition, the spices also may be deliberately adulterated with lead to enhance color or increase weight. Regulation is complicated by internet sales and importation through consumer travel.

The researchers recommended that lead investigators sample spices, herbal remedies and ceremonial powders and attempt to document product origin and level of consumption. Food safety regulators at the port of entry should test the products for heavy metals, and a national maximum allowable limit for lead in spices should be set.

## Study projects potential shortage of insulin for diabetes patients by 2030

By Storm Gifford  
New York Daily News

As people around the globe continue to get fatter, diabetes rates will continue to rise and insulin supplies will be in short supply, a new study warns.

By 2030, an estimated 79 million adults with Type 2 diabetes are expected to need insulin. But if current quantities of the medicine remain level, as many as 40 million sufferers could be left without it, according to a report in the journal *The Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology*.

“These estimates suggest that cur-

rent levels of insulin access are highly inadequate compared to projected need, especially in Africa and Asia,” explained Dr. Sanjay Basu, an assistant professor of medicine at Stanford University. “And more efforts should be devoted to overcoming this looming health challenge.”

Insulin is used to treat those with Type 1 diabetes and some people with Type 2 diabetes, which is linked to obesity and little physical activity.

Researchers predict that the number of adults with Type 2 diabetes will rocket 25 percent from 406 million in

2018 to 511 million in 2030. The U.S. is expected to be the third-largest population with diabetes sufferers at 32 million in a little more than a decade.

“The number of adults with Type 2 diabetes is expected to rise over the next 12 years due to aging, urbanization and associated changes in diet and physical activity,” said Basu.

While nearly 80 million people could be in need of insulin, only 38 million are likely to have access to it, based on current numbers. Also, the expensive treatment is dominated by three manufacturers

### Attention IT Professionals

Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative is looking for an Information Technology Analyst/Desktop Support person for its Headquarters location in Baker City. The Information Technology Analyst/Desktop Support position helps maintain the enterprise computing environment including installing, configuring and maintaining hardware, software and mobile devices with an emphasis on endpoints and their peripherals. Develops innovative technology solutions to enhance and enable productivity for the organization. Provides in-house technical analysis and consultation. Cultivates and maintains an in-depth knowledge of current and emerging computer and information technologies to plan future direction for the enterprise computing and mobile environment.

A full position description can be viewed at [www.otecc.com/careers](http://www.otecc.com/careers).



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