



Easter Egg Hunts

When you're planning an Easter egg hunt, you want to make sure that you find the eggs -- and that bacteria doesn't find you! Use these tips to plan an egg-citing -- and safe -- event.

Before the hunt...

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water thoroughly before handling eggs at every preparation step, including cooking, cooling, dyeing and hiding.
- Only use eggs that have been refrigerated, and discard eggs that are cracked or dirty.
- When cooking, place a single layer of eggs in a saucepan. Add water to at least one inch above the eggs. Cover the pan, bring the water to a boil, and carefully remove the pan from the heat. Let the eggs stand (18 minutes for extra large eggs, 15 minutes for large, 12 minutes for medium). Immediately run cold water over the eggs. When the eggs are cool enough to handle, place them in an uncovered container in the refrigerator where they can air-dry.



- When decorating, be sure to use food-grade dyes. It is safe to use commercial egg dyes, liquid food coloring, and fruit-drink powders. When handling eggs, be careful not to crack them. Otherwise, bacteria could enter the egg through the cracks in the shell.
- Keep hard-cooked Easter eggs refrigerated until just before the hunt. Keep them fully chilled by storing them on a shelf inside the refrigerator, not in the refrigerator door.
- Consider buying one set of eggs for decorating only and another set for eating.

During the hunt...

- Hide the eggs in places that are protected from dirt, pets and other potential sources of bacteria.
- To prevent bacterial growth, don't let eggs sit in hiding places for more than two hours.

After the hunt...

- Throw away eggs that were cracked, dirty or not found within two hours.
 - Place the eggs back in the refrigerator until it's chow time!

