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How Can I Keep My Kitchen Safe From Harmful Bacteria? Part 1

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A weekly question/answer column

How Can I Keep My Kitchen Safe From Harmful Bacteria?

Charlotte Brennand answers:*

(First in a four-part series on food safety in the kitchen—CLEAN)

Bacteria can spread throughout the kitchen and get onto cutting boards, utensils, sponges and counter tops. Bacteria can be spread from one food product to another. The first step is to clean.

- Wash your hands with hot soapy water before handling food and after using the bathroom, changing diapers and handling pets.
- Wash your cutting boards, dishes, utensils and counter tops with hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before you go on to the next food.
- Use plastic or other non-porous cutting boards. These boards should be run through the dishwasher— or washed in hot soapy water— after use.
- Consider using paper towels to clean up kitchen surfaces. If you use cloth towels, wash them often in the hot cycle of your washing machine.

* Charlotte Brennand is Utah State University Extension Food Safety Specialist