

# JUST THE FLU, OR SOMETHING YOU ATE?

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## Seniors at Greater Risk

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The news often reports stories about people getting sick from eating a contaminated food. Most recently, in a dramatic twist, a pet food company had to recall some of their dog foods due to contamination! Even though anyone can become ill from eating contaminated foods, certain groups of people including seniors are more at risk for developing food borne illness than others. The main reason for this has to do with the immune system. As we age, our immune systems aren't as strong as they were when we were younger, making it more difficult to fight off infections.

In fact, research shows that at those 50 years old and older suffer more severe complications from food borne illness than those that are younger. These complications include hospitalization and an increased incidence in death. Because the most common symptoms of food borne illness are similar to the flu, (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramping, headache and fever) they're often overlooked or dismissed. You can take steps to protect yourself and your loved ones from the uninvited guests that can cause food borne illness. Check out the food safety tips located in this newsletter and learn how to "Fight BAC!"®

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### Remember:

- Seniors are at greater risk of having severe complications from food borne illness
- If in Doubt, Throw it Out!

### Four Steps to Fight BAC!®

**Clean:** Wash hands and surfaces often.

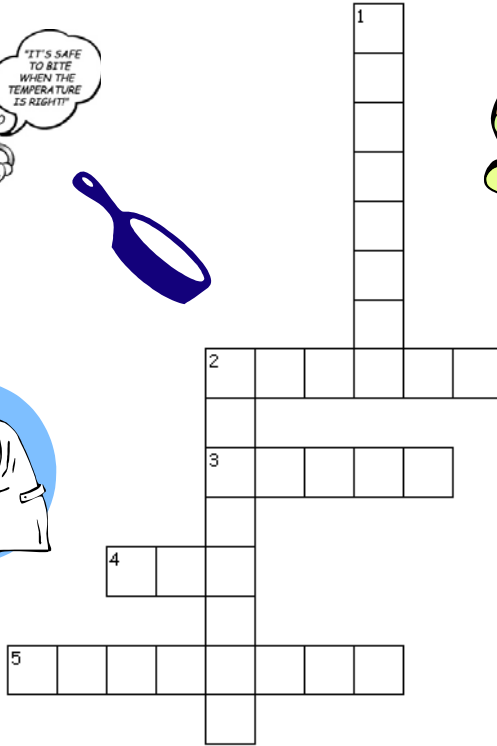
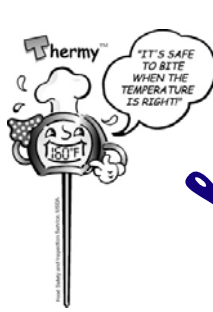
**Cook:** Cook foods to proper temperatures.

**Separate:** Don't cross-

contaminate. Keep raw produce separate from raw meats.

**Chill:** Refrigerate foods promptly.

# Food Safety Crossword Fun



**Did You Know?**

- The first microwave oven was available in 1947, but wasn't widely used or accepted until the 1970's.

**Across**

- 2. Seniors are at greater risk of having \_\_\_\_\_ complications from food borne illness.
- 3. Don't fall for food safety \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4. If in Doubt, Throw it \_\_\_\_\_!
- 5. Heat ready-to-eat food such as hot dogs, luncheon meats, fully cooked ham and leftovers until \_\_\_\_\_ hot.

**Down**

- 1. The four steps to FightBAC!® are clean, chill, cook and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2. The most common \_\_\_\_\_ of food borne illness are similar to the flu.



**Answers to last month's crossword puzzle:**  
**Across:** 3. Meals 5. Cheerful 6. Doctor 7. Effects  
**Down:** 1. Medications 2. Natural 4. Rusted



## Quick Fix Recipe of the Month

### Mary's White Chili

Yield: 8 servings  
Serving size: 1 cup



#### Ingredients:

- 1 pound ground turkey
- 2 (15 ounce) cans great northern beans
- 1 (16 ounce) can white hominy
- 1 package Lawry's chili seasoning

#### Method:

1. Brown turkey in nonstick skillet. Drain any fat from pan.
2. Add undrained beans and hominy.
3. Combine chili seasoning with the 1/2 cup water called for in package and add to turkey chili.
4. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes and until heated through.

*Recipe from, 'Low Fat & Light Four Ingredient Cookbook.'*

### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (221g)  
Servings Per Container 8

#### Amount Per Serving

**Calories 250**      **Calories from Fat 50**

% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat 6g**      **9%**

Saturated Fat 1.5g      **8%**

**Cholesterol 45mg**      **15%**

**Sodium 230mg**      **10%**

**Total Carbohydrate 31g**      **10%**

Dietary Fiber 7g      **28%**

Sugars 1g

**Protein 19g**

Vitamin A 0%      • Vitamin C 2%

Calcium 6%      • Iron 15%

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

		Calories 2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less Than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less Than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less Than	300mg	300 mg
Sodium	Less Than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

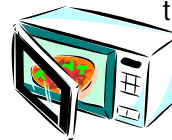
Calories per gram:

Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

## LOU'S Food Safety Tip of the Month: Microwave Safely

Using a microwave to reheat and cook foods is a convenient time saver. But you must use this quick cooker carefully to ensure thorough cooking to prevent food borne illness.

1. Cover foods with a lid or microwave safe plastic wrap.
2. Stir or rotate food halfway through



the microwaving time to avoid cold spots and uneven heating.

3. Use a food thermometer to make sure reheated foods reach 165 degrees F.
4. Heat ready-to-eat foods such as hot dogs, luncheon meats, fully cooked ham and leftovers until steaming hot.



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**We're on the Web!**  
[www.voacolorado.org](http://www.voacolorado.org)

The Volunteers of America is a national non-profit, spiritually-based human services organization. Since 1896 Volunteers of America Colorado Branch has been seeking to identify and serve the basic needs of the most vulnerable individuals and families in our community. If you would like information on how you can get involved, please call us at:

303-297-0408.

Ask for Meals on Wheels.

*Meals on Wheels is funded in part by the Denver Regional Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging.*

## Don't Fall for Food Safety Myths

Misconceptions about food safety are common and can make us sick. Check your food safety savvy against the statements that follow:



**Myth 1: "If it tastes okay, it's okay to eat."** Trusting your taste buds to detect unsafe food will only get you into trouble. Taking a small nibble of the food in question can be dangerous. Eating just a small amount of a food contaminated with botulism, can be fatal.

**Myth 2: "We've always handled our food this way and nothing has ever happened."** Using past experience to predict whether food is safe or not may cause food borne illness. Many incidents of food borne

illness went undetected in the past. The nature of our food supply has changed and the opportunities for mishandling of foods are greater now than in the past. Today your food may travel half way around the world before it arrives on your table. (Twenty years ago three of the four most serious food-borne pathogens in the US were not recognized as sources of food-borne illness).

**Myth 3: "My family didn't get sick, so I should be okay too."** Although your family may have been okay, that doesn't mean YOU will be. Some individuals with weaker immune systems, like seniors, are more susceptible to food borne illness.

*Information for the above article taken from, 'Don't Mess with Food Safety Myths!, Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, Consumer Protection.*