

# FOOD SAFETY GUIDELINES WHEN EATING OUT



Cancer treatment such as chemotherapy may affect your body immune system, causing challenges for the body to fight against infections. Food safety practices help to reduce the risk of food borne illnesses and to improve overall outcome of treatment. Food safety practices are basically steps and measures taken during the handling, preparing and storage of food. Most of the time food safety practices can only be followed closely if you are preparing meals at home. However, eating out is unavoidable at times. This leaflet includes useful tips and guidelines that will help patients and caregivers in making safe food choices when eating out.

## Choosing Places to Eat

- ▶ Avoid crowded places
- ▶ Choose places that are generally clean
- ▶ Choose food stalls that have the healthier choice grading, in terms of cleanliness and hygiene (minimum grade: A or B)
- ▶ Observe all food handlers: they should be in clean attire, with apron and gloves, neatly cropped/bundled hair and no jewellery

## Grading Template of Food Establishments

The NEA's (National Environment Agency) Grading System for Eating Establishments and Footstalls was introduced in June 1997. Stalls are graded 'A', 'B', 'C' or 'D' according to their standards of cleanliness, housekeeping and hygiene. 'A' & 'B' would mean the stall has a higher standard of cleanliness, so going for food stalls with these grades would reduce the risk of food borne illness.

## Your Personal Hygiene

- ▶ Always wash hands with soap and rinse thoroughly before eating
- ▶ Use the hand-dryer or clean paper towel to wipe your hands dry
- ▶ Have a small bottle of hand sanitizer with you for cleaning your hands after paying for your food

| General Dos   | General Don'ts   |
|---|--|
| Bring your own utensils or use individually packed disposable utensils  | Avoid using (re-used) utensils that are provided by the stalls   |
| Use condiments that are pre-packed for one-time use only  | Avoid using condiments served or shared among consumers  |
| Order and request for the food to be cooked well and served instantly   | Do not consume food that is sold/ left on the shelf. This includes foods that are served from steam tables/trays and heat lamps (e.g. mixed vegetable rice/ noodles) |
| Always use a straw for can beverages (these should be individually packed straws)                                       | Avoid drinking directly from can beverages   |
| Choose beverages contained in can/ packet/ bottle (e.g. Bandung/ Milo/ barley/ ice lemon tea/orange juice/ apple juice) | Avoid pre-made drinks and fresh fruit juices (e.g. Bandung/ Ice Milo)  |
| Buy food packed in single-serving to avoid leftovers  | Do not eat leftovers that have been kept for more than 24 hours  |

## Making Safe Food Choices

Foods cooked and served to order are **recommended** for patients when eating out as they are at lower risk of contamination than foods sold on shelf. Most foods sold on shelf are usually cooked in the morning and left exposed for hours. This allows time for harmful bacteria to grow and increase the risk of food borne illnesses.

Below is a list of foods that can help you to identify the common foods that are 'cooked and served to order' versus those 'sold on shelf'.

| Cooked And Served To Order<br>(Recommended To Consume)   | Sold On Shelf<br>(Not Recommended To Consume)  |
|--|--|
| Prawn Noodles<br>Hor Fun<br>Yong Tau Foo<br>Fish Ball Noodles<br>Bak Kut Teh<br>Lor Mee<br>Ban Mian<br>Sliced Fish Noodle<br>Porridge<br>Mee Rebus<br>Mee Siam<br>Mee Soto<br>Baked Rice<br>Fried Rice*, Mee Goreng*, Nasi Goreng*<br>Chops#, Steaks#, Spaghetti#/ Pasta#<br># Steak and chops should be fully cooked; no pink meat and juices should run clear when sliced. Spaghetti/ Pasta to be served steaming hot.<br><br>* Fried Rice/ Nasi Goreng/ Mee Goreng should be cooked to order<br><br>Note: Side dishes such as Coleslaw, Salads, Baked Beans, French Fries should be avoided as they are prepared well in advance. | Chicken Rice<br>Char Siew Rice<br>Duck Rice<br>Wanton Mee<br>Mixed Vegetable Rice<br>Nasi Bryani<br>Nasi Lemak<br>Nasi Padang<br>Goreng Pisang, Curry Puff, Otah, Satay<br>Indian Rojak, Roti Prata, Thosai, Chapatti, Thali<br>Garlic Bread, Bread Stick, Sandwiches, Salad |



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