

Although you may check the website to find out how restaurants did on their most recent inspections, viewing the inspection reports of all of the places you plan to eat is usually not practical.

**Following these tips will also help you protect yourself from foodborne illness when eating out:**

### **Know the requirements.**

**Food service operators in Washington follow many food safety steps to serve safe food, including:**

**Food workers are trained to prevent bare hand contact** with ready-to-eat foods. Food workers must use gloves, tongs, or other barriers to keep from touching foods that are ready to be eaten (such as toast, sandwiches, and salad).

**Certain foods are supposed to be kept at proper temperatures for safety.** Foods such as meats, sliced melons, cooked vegetables, and cooked starches must be kept hot or cold. If your food is not as hot or cold as it should be, send it back.

**Food workers should wash their hands twice after using the restroom—** once in the restroom and then immediately upon returning to the kitchen.

**All food workers are required to have food safety training.** Read more about safe food handling in the *(on the Department of Health Services website)*.

### **Read the menu and signs.**

Restaurants and other food establishments use menus, signs and placards to notify you if certain animal foods (such as raw oysters or eggs served sunnyside up) are served raw or undercooked.

### **Ask questions.**

Someone in the establishment must be able to tell you how your foods were prepared. This person is called the Person in Charge.

### **Order wisely.**

For example: order your hamburger well done (cooked to a temperature of 155°F) and send it back if it is undercooked. **Also avoid certain foods – such as sprouts, undercooked meats, and raw oysters – if you are at high risk for foodborne illness.** People at high risk for foodborne illness include young children, senior citizens, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems.

### **Let your voice be heard.**

Tell the food establishment's manager when you notice food safety concerns or give a compliment to the manager when you notice safe food handling.

### **Call the health department.**

Food safety questions, complaints, and comments can be sent to the Department of Health Services by email or by phone at (972) 875-1234.