

MAYONNAISE: THE MISUNDERSTOOD DRESSING



**Facts that set the record
straight about food safety
and commercial mayonnaise**

The safety of commercially prepared mayonnaise and mayonnaise-type salad dressings has been well-documented in scores of scientific studies.

HERE'S WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY:

Commercial mayonnaise is among the safest of foods when properly handled. Most harmful bacteria die off within hours in the presence of mayonnaise, largely due to its high acidity.

Michael P. Doyle, Ph.D., Professor and Director, University of Georgia, CENTER FOR FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

Commercial mayonnaise and other commercial dressings are prepared under strict quality controls, and acidulents and salt are added that prevent the growth of food-poisoning bacteria. In fact, hazardous bacteria die off if placed in the commercially prepared product.

Douglas L. Archer, Ph.D., Chair, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, DEPARTMENT OF FOOD SCIENCE AND NUTRITION, former Acting Deputy Director, CENTER FOR FOOD SAFETY AND APPLIED NUTRITION

Contrary to popular opinion, mayonnaise and salad dressing when added to salads or sandwiches will not increase spoilage or public health hazards, but actually retard spoilage and growth of pathogenic microorganisms.

Richard B. Smittle, "Microbiology of Mayonnaise and Salad Dressing: A Review," *Journal of Food Protection*

Mayonnaise is not the culprit in foodborne illness. The culprits are foods that are not prepared, served or stored properly.

AMERICAN DIETETIC ASSOCIATION Web site "Tip of the Day! Beware of Food Spoilage as Weather Warms Up"

WHO IS THE ASSOCIATION FOR DRESSINGS AND SAUCES?

The Association for Dressings and Sauces is an international association of salad dressing, mayonnaise, mustard and other condiment manufacturers and their suppliers. The ADS Web site - www.dressings-sauces.org - contains information and tips on mayonnaise safety and links to government agencies providing food safety information. It also features a Video News Release on picnic safety and dozens of recipes using mayonnaise and other popular salad dressings.

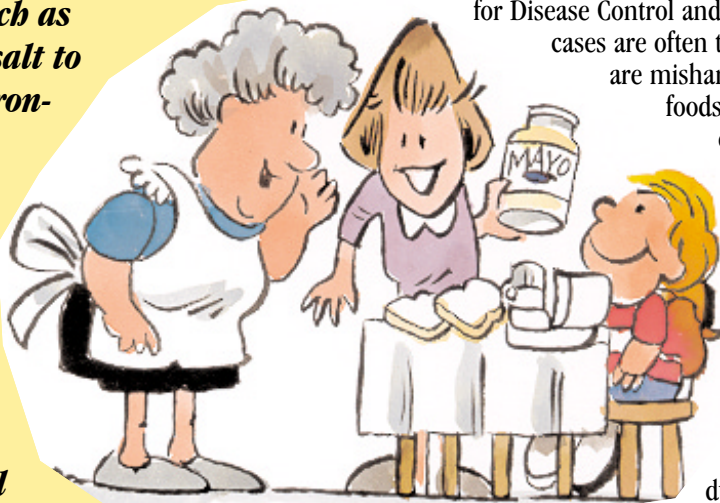


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Over 60 years of research has proven commercially prepared mayonnaise does not cause foodborne illness. In fact, these commercial products are carefully prepared with ingredients such as vinegar, lemon juice and salt to create an unfriendly environment that inhibits the growth of bacteria and, indeed, can kill it. Commercial mayonnaise and mayonnaise-type salad dressings also contain pasteurized eggs that have been heat-treated to destroy harmful bacteria and ensure product safety.



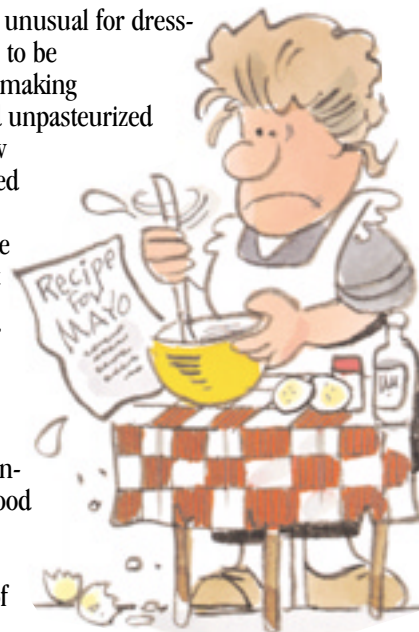
Q. IF MAYONNAISE ISN'T A FOOD SAFETY PROBLEM, WHAT IS?

A. Unsanitary handling and preparation of foods in home kitchens and foodservice operations pose the greatest threat of bacterial contamination of food. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, foodborne illness cases are often traced back to: raw foods that are mishandled or contaminate other foods; undercooked meat, poultry or eggs; and, unsanitary kitchen habits and poor storage temperatures. Many of the foods typically used with mayonnaise, such as chicken, ham, or potatoes, are much more susceptible to bacterial growth than the mayonnaise itself. When preparing these foods, follow proper procedures for handling and storage.

SEE TIPS →

Q. WHERE DID THIS "MAYO MYTH" BEGIN?

A. Many years ago, it was not unusual for dressings, mayonnaise in particular, to be prepared from scratch. When making mayonnaise, home cooks used unpasteurized eggs which scientists now know can sometimes be contaminated by Salmonella bacteria. Also, homemade mayonnaise, unlike commercial products, may not contain enough salt and vinegar to counteract the growth of harmful bacteria. The introduction and advancement of commercial mayonnaise production has given American consumers access to a variety of good tasting, safe dressings. Today's commercial mayonnaise does not have the food safety risks of its homemade predecessor.



Q. HOW CAN I MAKE SURE THE FOODS I SERVE AT A COOKOUT ARE SAFE?

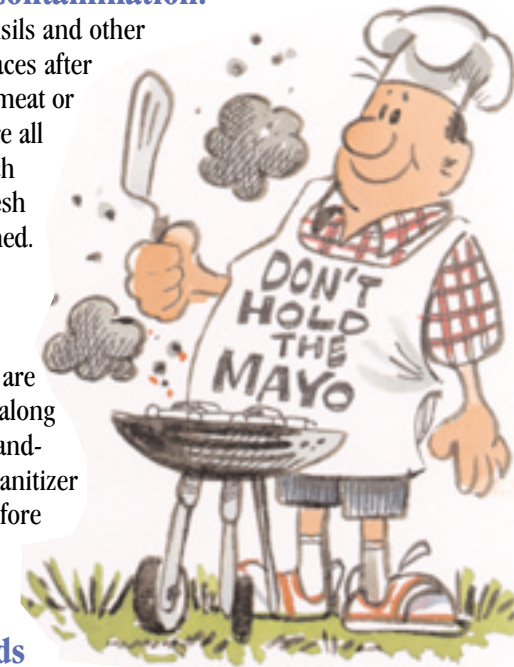
A. Remember these simple rules from the Association for Dressings and Sauces and the U.S. Department of Agriculture:

Avoid Cross-Contamination.

Wash hands, utensils and other food contact surfaces after contact with raw meat or poultry. Make sure all salad and sandwich ingredients are fresh and properly washed.

Practice Cleanliness.

If soap and water are unavailable, take along disposable, wet hand-wipes or a hand sanitizer to clean hands before and after working with food.



Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.

Keep all perishables in a cooler with ice or freeze-pack inserts until serving time. Make sure that food is frozen or cold to the touch before placing it in the cooler or cold thermos. Use a thermos designed for hot foods to keep soup, chili and stews at a safe temperature for several hours. Refrigerate leftovers at 35-45°F within two hours when the temperature of the food serving area is below 90°F, within an hour when the temperature is above 90°F.

Don't hold the mayo! Today's commercial mayonnaise products are made with pasteurized eggs and the right blend of vinegar and salt to impart good flavor and fight bacterial growth. So not only can busy consumers enjoy the ease and convenience of good-tasting commercial mayonnaise, they can do so with the assurance that these products have been manufactured under the strictest requirements that meet and exceed today's food safety standards.

Q. I HAVE HEARD THAT MAYONNAISE CAUSES FOOD POISONING, IS THIS TRUE?

A. No. Commercial mayonnaise and mayonnaise-type dressings are carefully prepared under strict quality controls. These commercial products contain pasteurized eggs that are free of Salmonella and other dangerous bacteria. Additional ingredients such as vinegar and lemon juice create a high-acid environment that slows, even stops, bacterial growth. Salt is also an important ingredient in commercial mayonnaise that contributes to the unfavorable environment for bacteria.

Q. WHAT HAPPENS IF I LEAVE MAYONNAISE UNREFRIGERATED FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME?

A. From a food safety standpoint, commercial mayonnaise and mayonnaise-type dressings are perfectly stable when stored at room temperature after opening. Quality, not safety, is the only reason the labels on these products suggest that they be refrigerated after opening. Refrigeration ensures that the commercial mayonnaise keeps its fresh flavor for a longer period of time.