

NEWSLETTER

Leftovers: To Eat Or Not?



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Ever since the invention of the refrigerator, and maybe before, we've had the opportunity to save fresh food for a later date. As we all know, this can be extremely useful. However, it presents an opportunity for us to inadvertently eat food that is not necessarily good for your digestive system. In this article we'll discuss what happens when good food goes bad.

All living organisms are constantly fighting decay. Micro-organisms have a nearly infinite appetite for living material. Of course, plants and animals have developed excellent resources for dealing with this. Sometimes this protection continues even once the food has been harvested, such as with rice and beans in their dry form.

But once we kill a plant or animal, in most cases it quickly loses its ability to fight this battle. All food eventually decays, but the question is, for how long will it be edible? Modern nutritional science has brought us all kinds of technology that allows us to maintain foods for a long time. Canning, freezing, and chemical preservatives are just some examples of ways we accomplish this.

But once we open the container or cook something, it only has so long before it succumbs to spoilage. Even in the refrigerator, it is succumbing to bacteria and yeast that were either on the food to begin with or are simply a part of the environment. It is at this point that bacteria and yeast can begin to divide and conquer without nearly so much resistance.

Food spoilage is a process. Food is not at one moment edible and then the next inedible. There is no line that is crossed. Spoilage is a gradual and continuous process. Bacteria and yeast are constantly all around us. They are even on good food, to a very small extent.

We normally digest these little critters without concern. In fact, our digestive tracts are designed to handle small amounts of bacteria and yeast. We evolved with them. But it is a game of numbers. And too many microbes can overwhelm our digestive tract, even if only temporarily. This is called food poisoning.

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Some foods are known to be problematic, for example, potato salad. Most people have heard the old adage to avoid the potato salad at the picnic after it has sat out for a while in the heat. The safety experts at Cook's Illustrated magazine say that the potato starch is the problem as it is a great host for bacteria, while the mayonnaise is acidic enough to stay safe a bit longer. But when the bacteria get started the outcome is very unpleasant. Bacteria grow particularly well between 40 and 140 degrees F. Refrigerated it can last a lot longer, but once it sits out, danger!

Other foods offer visual clues. You can see the mold growing on your bread or cheese, or for that matter inside the lid of the spaghetti sauce. Definitely avoid these.

Be careful about sliced meats. Many don't last long. Have you ever noticed a slight green iridescent sheen on the sliced roast beef? That is bacteria. Sliced roast beef only lasts about 3 days. The same goes for sliced turkey. You might not notice a sheen on the turkey, but it usually doesn't last long.

But what about the things you can't see? Leftovers generally shouldn't be kept for more than about 5 days in the refrigerator. If you're not sure, then don't eat it. Most of us aren't starving. We can afford to throw out old food. If you think you'll want to keep it longer, be sure to freeze it.

And check the expiration dates on all of those containers in your refrigerator. If it's past the date, chuck it. And if you forget to refrigerate something or left it out a lot longer than you should have, throw it out too.

Different foods have different longevity, but these are some tips for keeping your digestive tract healthy. If in doubt, throw it out. This is especially true for people with a history of digestive problems. Their digestive tract may not be able to handle as much of an insult as someone with a stronger digestive constitution.

Eat healthy and stay safe. And remember, **“If in doubt, throw it out!”**

Regular Features

February's Product Review

Bionaturae Pasta



It took more than a year of experimenting with ingredients for Bionaturae to create a recipe for an Italian tasting gluten-free pasta. This recipe is so successful that it comes recommended by Shelley Case, the author of “Gluten-Free Diet” and by the writer who is celiac and has suffered through many mushy, tasteless, dry or hard pastas, namely rice or corn pastas. Bionaturae, meaning organic nature, is made in Italy and is the only gluten-free pasta that is inspected and produced in a dedicated gluten-free facility. When the pasta is imported to the United States it is again tested, case by case, for gluten. It is made from a combination of rice, potato and soy and is available as spaghetti, elbow, penne, and fusilli. Please check out their web site for additional information and a location you can purchase this truly great product, <http://www.bionaturae.com/gluten.html>

Events

Support Group At IBS Treatment Center

The IBS Treatment Center hosts a support group, open to the public usually on the first Tuesday of every month from 6:30-7:45PM.

Meet other people with IBS, food allergies, and/or gluten intolerance at these fun and educational events. Dr. Wangen attends most meetings. In fact, Dr. Wangen spoke about his new book, "Healthier Without Wheat" at the February 3rd meeting. For more information, please call 206-264-1111.

The Next Meeting is on **March 3, 2009 from 6:30 to 7:45 PM**. This meeting will feature guest speaker, Robin Maynard-Dobbs a specialist in helping people manage their relationship with food. That topic ought to interest a lot of people. Check out her website <http://www.awareeating.com>

Location of meeting: IBS Treatment Center, 1229 Madison St. Suite 1220, Seattle, WA 98104

Phone: 206-264-1111 View driving directions at <http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&q=1229+Madison+St.Seattle+WA+98104>

Upcoming GIG Events

You might want to mark your calendar for these special events.

GIG, the Gluten Intolerance Group of North America, is conducting a national awareness campaign for gluten-free living through the restaurants that support persons living with gluten intolerances. Since May is *Celiac Awareness Month*, GIG is working with participating restaurants to serve a gluten-free meal on **Sunday, May 3, 2009**. Keep posted for an update on restaurants that will be participating in the "**Chef to Plate – Celebrating Restaurants Serving Up Gluten-Free Awareness**" or contact your local GIG to find out which restaurants will be participating in your area.

June 5th and 6th 2009 is the 2009 GIG Annual Education Conference to be held at the SeaTac Marriott in Seattle, WA. Check the website <http://www.gluten.net> for details.

Sharon Gray's Cooking Series For Digestive Health

Sharon Gray is back with a 4 part series of classes: "Whole Foods Cooking for Digestive Health" to be held at Whole Foods Market at Roosevelt Square in Seattle, beginning **Tuesday, February 17, 2009** from 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM for a cost of \$175. Sharon's message is that self nourishment is the first step in healing and maintaining good health. Her blend of traditional Chinese medicine and whole foods nutrition is especially intended for those with food sensitivities including gluten, dairy, egg or soy. For more information go to <http://theartofnourishment.blogspot.com>

Announcements

Dr. Wangen's Scheduled Presentations

Dr. Stephen Wangen has several scheduled presentations. Several are to discuss his new book, "Healthier Without Wheat".

Monday, March 9, 2009 at 7:00 PM, Dr. Wangen will be at the University Bookstore, 4326 University Way NE, Seattle doing an author presentation of his new book, "Healthier Without Wheat". **Everyone is welcome to attend.**

Tuesday, March 10, 2009 at 5:30 PM, Dr. Wangen will be a member of the Grand Rounds at Bastyr University concerning *IBS* treatment. The location of this event is at University House, 4400 Stone Way North in Seattle. **The Grand Rounds are for health care providers only.**

Thursday, April 9, 2009 at 7:00 PM, Dr. Wangen will discuss his book, "Healthier Without Wheat" at Third Place Books, 17171 Bothell Way NE in Lake Forest Park. **Everyone is welcome to attend.**

Wednesday, April 15, 2009 at 6:00 PM, Dr. Wangen will discuss his book, "Healthier Without Wheat" at the Seattle Public Library downtown, 1000 4th Ave. **Everyone is welcome to attend.**

Thursday, April 16, 2009 at 7:00 PM Dr. Wangen will discuss his book, "Healthier Without Wheat" for the Bellingham GIG at St. Luke's Community Health Education Center, <http://www.google.com/search?q=3333+Squalicum+Pkwy+Bellingham%2C+WA+98226>
Everyone is welcome to attend.

Thursday, April 23, 2009 from Noon to 1:30 PM Dr. Wangen will discuss his book, "Healthier Without Wheat" at Bastyr University in the Bookstore auditorium. Directions to Bastyr can be found at: <http://www.bastyr.edu/about/map.asp> **Everyone is welcome to attend.**