Safe Food Handling Guidelines

The Stem Cell Transplant Program at Riley at IU Health will follow the "safe food handling general diet" and no longer have a "neutropenic diet" or "low bacteria diet." The new rules for the safe food handling general diet are as follows:

Foods to Avoid at Home and in Restaurants
- Raw and undercooked meats and fish (like sushi)
- Cold smoked fish (salted or brined and then smoked at a low temperature, like lox)
- Aged cheeses such as Brie, Roquefort or blue
- Raw or unpasteurized dairy products
- Unpasteurized fruit and vegetable juices
- Raw and undercooked eggs
- Refrigerated salad dressings and sauces that contain raw or undercooked eggs (like Caesar dressing)
- Raw miso products and tofu
- Raw seeds, nuts and grains
- Unpackaged items that sit out in open bins
- Herbal and nontraditional supplements
- Raw mushrooms

Eating Restaurant Food
- Avoid buffets, salad bars and places where food can sit out for a long time, even if chilled (like deli counters and sandwich shops). If food sits out, bacteria can grow.
- Go to restaurants that are busy. The food will not sit out waiting to be ordered and eaten.
- Ask that food is made to order for you and your child. This way, it will not sit around and have the chance to grow germs. If the restaurant is too busy to make your food to order, come back later or eat somewhere else.
- Ask that foods be fully cooked. Send it back if it looks undercooked.
- Use your common sense. If the restaurant and staff do not look clean, do not eat there.
- Carryout food should be either eaten or refrigerated within one hour of purchase.

Stem cell transplant patients may have carryout food that follows the above rules, but they should not go to restaurants while in isolation from crowds after the transplant. Talk to your child's doctor or nurse practitioner about isolation rules and when you can go to restaurants again.

Safe Food Handling Guidelines
- Wash your hands before, during and after preparing food and before eating.
- Use separate utensils and plates for cooked and uncooked foods.
- Keep hot foods hot (above 140 degrees Fahrenheit) and cold foods cold (below 40 degrees Fahrenheit). If food is left out at room temperature for more than an hour, throw it away. This includes milk, juice and soda.
- Put leftovers in the refrigerator right away. Heat leftovers completely before eating. Throw away leftovers after 24 hours.
• Pour foods out of packages instead of sticking your hand in the package. Store packaged foods in zipper plastic bags.
• Do not use food from cans or jars that are dented, cracked or have swollen lids. Wipe can lids off with a soapy cloth then rinse with warm water before opening.
• At home, wash dish towels, dish cloths and sponges often. They carry germs.
• Wash all fruits and vegetables.
• Wash the outside of melons before cutting them to avoid introducing bacteria to the inside of the fruit when cutting.
• Watch the news: Do not eat any "trouble" foods based on Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports and news releases (like the Salmonella-contaminated melons from Indiana in 2012).
• For more safe food handling tips, please visit:
  o www.fightbac.org
  o www.foodsafety.gov
  o www.cdc.gov/foodsafety