

Maggie's Health Tips



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Is the "Five Second Rule" True?

It's hard to hold onto food when you have hands like mine. Have you heard someone say, "5-second rule," after they've dropped food and picked it up from the floor? This so-called rule says food is OK to eat if you pick it up in 5 seconds or less.

Believe it or not, scientists have tested the rule. It's not necessarily true. Bacteria can attach itself to your food even if you pick it up quickly. But will it attract enough bacteria to make you sick? It's possible — and that's why you shouldn't eat food that has hit the floor.

Here's what you need to know about the 5-second rule:

1. A clean-looking floor isn't necessarily clean. Some germs can survive on the floor for a long time. Chances are, some bacteria are probably living on your kitchen floor and the cafeteria floor at school.
2. Faster is better. A piece of food will pick up more bacteria the longer it stays on the floor.
3. Fast may not be fast enough. Bacteria can attach to your food as soon as it hits the floor.
4. When in doubt, toss it out. Some bacteria are not harmful. But it doesn't take much of the bad bacteria to make you sick.

What should you do with that yummy piece of food that just slipped from your grip? The safest choice is to throw it out.

Clean Hands



Stop Germs



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