

Filling *Half Your Plate* with fruits and veggies is an important part of a healthy diet, but did you know that harmful germs can sometimes be on fruits and veggies? Follow these produce safety tips from [Health Canada](#) to help keep you and your family safe:



At the Grocery Store: **Shopping for Produce**

- Choose fruits and veggies that aren't bruised or damaged.
- If buying pre-cut and ready-to-eat fruits and veggies, make sure they're refrigerated.
- Separate your fruits and veggies from meat, poultry, and seafood in your shopping cart and bags.



At Home: **Unloading Your Produce**

- Wash your hands when you arrive home both before and after unloading your produce. Washing your hands properly and often is your number one defence against catching the virus.
- The risk of COVID-19 living on the packaging of your produce is incredibly low. However disinfecting your countertop before and after putting away groceries is always a good idea.
- Do not wear gloves. Gloves themselves can get dirty and spread contaminants.
- Many retailers are no longer allowing the use of reusable bags at this time. If you use reusable bags, wash them after each use.



At Home: **Chilling Your Produce**

- At home, refrigerate fruits and veggies that need to be refrigerated. This includes all pre-cut and ready-to-eat produce. Visit [HalfYourPlate.ca](#) to find out which fruits and veggies should be refrigerated.
- Separate your fruits and veggies from meat, poultry, and seafood in the fridge.
- Keep your fridge at 4°C (40°F) or lower.



At Home: **Cleaning Your Produce**

- Clean and sanitize countertops, cutting boards, and utensils before and after preparing food.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wash fruits and veggies under fresh, cool, running water, even if you plan to peel them.
- You do not need to use produce cleansers to wash fruits and veggies.
- Ready-to-eat, bagged, and pre-washed leafy greens do not need to be washed again.
- Scrub fresh fruits and veggies with firm surfaces or rinds (e.g. carrots, melons, potatoes, squash, oranges, etc.), using a soft, clean produce brush. This prevents anything living on the surface from entering your fruits and veggies when you cut it.
- Use a separate cutting board for produce.
- Cut away any damaged or bruised areas on fruits and veggies.