

Can food from an infected cook give you COVID-19?

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(HealthDay)—Even if your takeout dinner was prepared by a cook who

has COVID-19, there's little need to worry about your risk of infection, according to an expert in viruses.

"Restaurant kitchens can be one of the safest places in this [coronavirus outbreak](#) because they already practice strict hygiene protocols to avoid [foodborne illness](#)," said Paula Cannon, a professor of molecular microbiology and immunology at Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California, in Los Angeles.

"Owners are taking this extremely seriously and monitoring their staff for symptoms, and encouraging the strictest adherence to all food hygiene procedures," Cannon said in a university news release.

Even if a sick chef was preparing your pizza, burger or lo mien and they coughed onto the food—"which I think is extraordinarily unlikely to happen," Cannon said—there are also easy, additional safeguards you can adopt at home.

For example, she pointed out that it's easy to kill the new coronavirus with heat. So rewarming your meal when you get it home, or making sure that it's hot, should provide extra reassurance, Cannon said.

If you're still uneasy, buy food to eat the next day and store it in the fridge or the freezer, she suggested. Time, as well as heat, kills the new coronavirus.

Concerned that the virus may be lingering on the outside of delivery containers? Then transfer your food to a clean container of your own—and be sure to wash your hands before eating, Cannon advised.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on how to protect yourself from the [new coronavirus](#).

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