

**Stop**



ANTONIO CALANNI/AP

Britain's food agency is urging people to stop washing raw chicken before cooking it, because it spreads bacteria around the kitchen.

# **washing raw chicken, food agency advises**

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Lesley Ciarula Taylor

Staff Reporter

Julia Child and other old cookbooks may tell you to wash raw chicken before cooking, but health agencies are warning against it.

The [British Food Standards Agency](#) has joined the chorus that advises to stop rinsing off raw chicken. The agency contends that 65 per cent of all raw chicken is contaminated with campylobacter, which causes food poisoning.

Cooking kills the bacteria; washing raw chicken just spreads it around the kitchen, the FSA says.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency has long warned against spreading campylobacter through raw food, including chicken, and advised washing hands and surfaces with soap and water after handling.

[Campylobacter jejuni](#), which can cause stomach cramps, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting, is found in the intestines of poultry, cattle and pigs. It is responsible for up to 14 per cent of the cases of diarrhea, according to Ontario's [Workplace Safety & Insurance Board](#).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture also advises against washing raw chicken, and points out that brining chicken in salt water is a taste issue, not one of food safety.

The British FSA is advocating one step further, however: antimicrobial washes for raw chicken before it goes on sale.

"We are aware there may be resistance from the public to antimicrobial

washes," an FSA spokesman tells the *Daily Telegraph*. "That is why we are starting this consultation."

New Zealand uses the wash, which is diluted lactic acid, on chicken carcasses, but it is not yet approved by the European Union.

The FSA estimates 300,000 people in England and Wales fall ill because of campylobacter each year and 80 die.