University of California
Cooperative Extension

**Master
Food
Preserver**

Handling Raw Flour

JUST SAY "NO" TO EATING RAW BATTER AND DOUGH!

Flour is, generally speaking, a raw agricultural product which has not undergone any treatment to kill pathogenic bacteria – such as *E. coli* and *Salmonella* – that can cause foodborne illness. Several disease outbreaks associated with flour and flour products (including commercially made cake mix and raw cookie dough) caused many people to become severely ill, with some requiring hospitalization. These cases, and the large product recalls that resulted because of contaminated flour, point out the importance of **never eating raw dough** and for **handling raw flour carefully**. Fortunately, properly cooking or baking flour will inactivate harmful bacteria and make the flour safe to eat.

Here are a few recommendations on handling raw flour and flour products:

- don't eat or even taste any product that contains raw flour (or raw eggs, for that matter) – alas, this means don't lick the bowl or the beaters!
- don't use raw homemade raw cookie dough in ice cream
- cook or bake products to proper temperatures and for specified times
- children should not play with raw dough, including dough made for crafts
- because of the powdery nature of flour, it spreads, so avoid cross contamination by keeping it separate from other raw foods and by washing hands, utensils and work areas after contact with raw flour

For further information on the dangers of consuming raw flour and flour products, visit the CDC website at https://www.cdc.gov/food-safety/foods/no-raw-dough.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/communication/no-raw-dough.html.

Brought to you by the UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County
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