Common kitchen appliances and tools harboring unsafe levels of *E. coli*, *Salmonella*, *Listeria*, yeast and mold may be a contributing factor to foodborne illness, according to a recent study by NSF International, an independent global public health and safety organization.

Studies have shown that more than 20% of foodborne illness outbreaks result from food that was consumed in the home. (According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov)

**CONTRIBUTING FACTORS:**
1. Improper food storage
2. Food handling
3. Food preparation

Because NSF evaluates the cleanliness of common household kitchen tools and appliances under the NSF Home Products Certification Program, NSF wondered whether consumers actually follow manufacturer cleaning instructions. As part of the 2013 NSF International Germ Study, NSF’s microbiologist analyzed 14 common kitchen items for the presence of four different types of microorganisms: *E. coli*, *Salmonella*, *Listeria*, and yeast and mold.

**AT-RISK POPULATIONS:**
These germ study findings are most concerning for households with at-risk populations such as children, pregnant women, the elderly or those with a compromised immune system (from illness).

**E. coli**
36% of items tested positive for *E. coli*

**Salmonella**
36% of items tested positive for *Salmonella*

**Listeria**
14% of items tested positive for *Listeria*

**Yeast & Mold**
43% of items tested at concerning levels for yeast and mold

**Staying Safe**
NSF has worked to help ensure the safe design and cleaning of food equipment and appliances used in food preparation since the 1940s, focusing on equipment used in restaurants. NSF’s Home Product Certification Program began in 2012, addressing kitchen appliances and tools used in the home. In addition to evaluating performance, durability and materials, the program evaluates manufacturers’ cleaning instructions to help prevent equipment from harboring pathogens that can cause foodborne illness.

**Cleaning Tips**
Cleaning tips are available online at www.nsf.org/consumer

**Look for the Mark**
Look for the NSF Mark on product packaging

**Contact Us**
Email the NSF Consumer Affairs Office
info@nsf.org

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