

FOOD SAFETY IN YOUR HOME

*Tips on shopping, storage,
preparing, serving and
clean up.*

Shopping for Food

For the consumer, safe food handling begins in the grocery store. Pay attention to the following tips:



- When you're running errands, grocery shop last. In the store, grab the cold (and frozen) foods just before check-out so they don't have a chance to thaw out.
- If you live some distance from the grocery store, use coolers for perishables.
- Take food straight home to the refrigerator. Do not leave food in a hot car.
- Buy what you can use by the "use-by" date. If you eat food after the use-by date, it may be spoiled or diminished in quality.
- Do not buy food in poor condition. Make sure cold food is cold and frozen food shows no signs of "freezer burn" or leakage. Canned goods should be free of dents, cracks or bulging lids; if you notice any of these, let the store manager know.

Food Storage

To avoid foodborne illness, store food safely in your home. Make sure your refrigerator is working properly and store non-perishables in clean, dry cupboards.

Here are a few tips to help you:

- To keep bacteria in check, the refrigerator should run at 41 degrees Fahrenheit and the freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit.



Generally, keep your refrigerator as cold as possible without freezing milk or lettuce.

- If you won't be using fresh meat, poultry or fish immediately, wrap it well and put it in the coldest part of the freezer.

- Packages of raw meat, poultry or fish should be wrapped well enough (zip-lock bags work great) so juices do not drip onto other food in the refrigerator or freezer.
- Keep non-perishables in "dry, high" places away from pests and dampness.
- **When in doubt, throw it out!**

Preparing Food

There are two key words to keep in mind in preparing food:

CLEAN AND SEPARATE!

Here are a few tips to help you:



- Wash hands in hot, soapy water before preparing food, and after using the bathroom, changing diapers and handling pets. It is also a good idea to wash hands after preparing each dish so there is less risk of cross contamination.
- Keep raw meat, poultry, fish and their juices away from other food. If you slice raw chicken on a cutting board, thoroughly wash the board, knife and kitchen counter with hot, soapy water before preparing the salad.
- Use plastic or glass cutting boards instead of wood boards, where bacteria can hide in grooves.
- Defrost frozen meat in the microwave or the refrigerator, **NEVER** on the kitchen counter. Bacteria can grow in the outer layers of the food before the inside thaws. Always marinate meat in the refrigerator too.

Serving Food

Don't spoil a family dinner, holiday meal or any other occasion with a foodborne illness. Serve food safely.



Here are a few tips to help you:

- Use clean dishes and utensils to serve food. Each dish should have its own clean serving utensil.
- Serve grilled food on a clean plate too, not the same one that held raw meat, poultry or fish.
- Carry picnic food in a cooler with a cold pack. When possible, put the cooler in the shade and keep the lid on as much as you can.

- Never leave perishable food out of the refrigerator for more than 2 hours. When the temperature outside reaches 80 degrees Fahrenheit, don't leave food out more than 1 hour!
- Remember to keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot!!!

Cleaning Up

Of course, you should wash all dishes and cutlery in hot, soapy water, but what do you do with leftover food?

Here's a few tips to help you:



- Divide large amounts of leftovers into small, shallow containers for quick cooling in the refrigerator. Don't pack the refrigerator – cool air must circulate well to keep foods safe.
- With stuffed poultry or other meat, remove the stuffing and store it in a separate dish.
- Clean all surfaces well with hot, soapy water or better yet – a good disinfectant soap.

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO YOU BY:



and



