

Tips on keeping food safe to eat:

Food provides the nutrients our bodies need and also provides the nutrients for bacteria to grow. You may become ill if disease-producing bacteria are present and allowed to grow. Each year thousands of people get sick from food. Consider the following recommendations as we track food from the time we shop for it until it is eaten.

SHOPPING	COOKING	SERVING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for State/Federal inspection labels on meat/poultry products. • Read safe handling labels on packaged foods. • Shop for refrigerated and frozen foods last. • Don't buy leaky, swollen or torn packages. • Bag household cleaners separately. • Bag raw meats, poultry and seafoods separately. • Go directly home and place perishable foods in the refrigerator or freezer. <p>Frozen Foods May Be Defrosted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Overnight in the refrigerator ➤ In the microwave ➤ As part of the cooking process, or ➤ In continuous running water cooler than 70°F. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't defrost potentially hazardous foods at room temperature. The surface temperature of the food can be well above 40° for a prolonged period before the center is thawed, enabling disease producing bacteria time to grow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to cook foods thoroughly to kill disease producing bacteria. • Meats should be cooked until the juices are clear. If you use a meat thermometer, beef should be cooked to a minimum of 150 °F, pork 160 °F, and poultry 165 °F. • Ground Meats - Cook until there is no pink left and all the juices run clear. • Most bacterial contamination will be on the surface of meat items. • Steaks and roast beef can be eaten with a pink center because the surface is thoroughly cooked. • Ground meats should not be eaten with a pink center because the surface of the pieces of meat was mixed with the center in the grinding process. • Eat only cooked or pasteurized egg products and avoid foods containing raw eggs. • Examples of foods containing raw eggs include homemade cookie dough and homemade egg nog. <p>Avoid Contaminating Ready-To-Eat Food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanitize all food contact surfaces. • Wash hands and avoid hand contact with mouth, nose and head. • Don't use the same cutting board for salad that you used for raw meats, unless it is cleaned and sanitized between usage. • Don't store cooked food or food that will be eaten raw under raw food in the refrigerator. • Use a paper towel to wipe up meat juices and throw the paper towel away. After using a wash cloth, wash it thoroughly. • Don't use the same plate, knife or fork to pick up cooked food that was used to prepare or transport the raw product. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use sanitized plates, bowls, glasses and utensils. • Serve the food when it will be consumed - Don't prepare a plate and let it set in the microwave or on the table for a few hours waiting for a member of the family who worked late or stayed after school for an athletic event. <p>Leftovers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refrigerate immediately. • Don't allow potentially hazardous foods to sit at room temperature. It is risky to watch a TV program before cleaning up in the kitchen and storing any leftovers in the refrigerator. • Large quantities of leftovers, such as a large pot of chili should be divided into several small, shallow containers. • The time it takes for the food in the large container to cool can be long enough for bacterial growth. Never allow leftovers to cool to room temperature before refrigerating them. • It is not advisable to freeze leftovers. <p>Reheating Leftovers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoroughly reheat left over potentially hazardous food before eating. • The reheating kills bacteria that may have multiplied during the time the food cooled from 140 °F to below 40 °F. • Reheating should result in the product reaching 165 °F at its coldest

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