



Food SAFETY

Shopping at the Grocery Store

Don't buy:

- Damaged canned goods
- Packaged food that is open or has a broken seal
- Fruits or vegetables with broken skin
- Expired food items
- Discolored or moldy food
- Food that does not smell fresh

Food Preparation

Thawing Food

- Do not thaw food at room temperature. Germs can grow in these conditions.
- If thawing food in the refrigerator, allow plenty of time. Approximate five hours per one pound (454 grams) of meat or poultry.
- If thawing food in water, slowly run cold tap water over frozen food. If food is left in cold water, change the water every 30 minutes.

Cross-contamination

Cross-contamination occurs when bacteria is transferred between foods. This can happen on kitchen surfaces, cutting boards, utensils and unwashed hands. Cross-contamination can lead to food poisoning and illness.

To avoid cross-contamination:

- Wash your hands before and during food preparation. *For example, if you are handling raw chicken, wash your hands before touching other food.*
- Use separate cutting boards for fish, meat, chicken and fruits or vegetables.
- Clean all utensils after using them on raw fish, meat or chicken.
- Use a clean plate for cooked fish, meat or chicken. *For example, if you are grilling chicken, after placing the raw chicken on the grill, thoroughly clean or use another plate for the cooked chicken. The liquid from the raw chicken can cause cross-contamination.*
- Wash your hands before eating.
- Foods that are high in protein and moisture are most likely to grow bacteria:
 - Meat
 - Poultry
 - Dairy and eggs
 - Fish and seafood
 - Tofu
 - Prepared salads (i.e. potato or egg salad).
- Rinse all fruits and vegetables even if you plan to peel the skin. Bacteria can be transferred to the fruit or vegetable during the peeling process.

Preparing Food

Safe Internal Cooking Temperatures	
ITEM	TEMPERATURE
Beef, veal and lamb (whole and pieces)	
Medium-rare	145°F (63°C)
Medium	160°F (71°C)
Well done	170°F (77°C)
Pork (whole and pieces)	160°F (71°C)
Ground meat	
Beef, veal, lamb and pork	160°F (71°C)
Poultry (chicken, turkey)	165°F (74°C)
Poultry (chicken, turkey, duck)	
Pieces	165°F (74°C)
Whole	185°F (85°C)
Eggs	
Eggs	Cook until yolk and white are firm
Egg dishes	160°F (71°C)
Seafood	
Fish	145°F (63°C) – cook until flesh is opaque and separates easily with a fork
Shrimp, lobster, crab	Cook until flesh is pearly and opaque
Clams, oysters, mussels	Cook until shells open during cooking

Source: <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/mintemp.html> (accessed 9/25/14)

Storing Food

Refrigerate or freeze perishable food items immediately.

Do not store canned food items in an open can.

Check storage directions on labels.

Use ready-to-eat foods as soon as possible. *For example, the likelihood of a foodborne illness increases significantly if lunch meat remains in the refrigerator past its expiration date.*

The fridge and freezer should remain at proper temperatures:

- Refrigerator: 40°F (4°C)
- Freezer: 0°F (-18°C)
- Clean the refrigerator and freezer regularly.
- Foods stored in the refrigerator need to be covered. Frozen foods need to be stored in freezer bags.
- Check food expiration dates before consuming.
- Check pantry for damaged canned goods. Swelling, leaking, punctures, holes, fractures or rust can spoil and damage food.
- Do not store food, such as potatoes and onions, under the sink. Moisture from the sink can damage food.
- Keep food away from cleaning products.
- Label leftover food with expiration dates.

Source: <http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm093704.htm> (accessed 9/23/14)

Cleaning up

Cleaning – Wipe the counter with a clean dishrag and soapy water.

Sanitizing – Disinfect the counter using cleaning supplies like bleach or antibacterial cleaners. To be most effective, follow the instructions on the cleaning supplies.

1. Remove all glass, cookware or utensils from counter top.
2. Use a wet paper towel to wipe up spilled food or crumbs.
3. Use a soapy dishrag or paper towel to wipe the counter.

4. Dry the counter with a paper towel.
5. Use a paper towel to sanitize the counter with cleaning solution.
6. Allow plenty of time for the counter to air dry.

Clean all kitchen and dining surfaces regularly. If using a cloth dishrag, regularly wash it in the washing machine with hot water.

NOTE: Do not mix chemicals, this can produce toxic gas. For example, never mix chlorine bleach and ammonia.

Time Limits for Storing Food in the Refrigerator and Freezer

ITEM	REFRIGERATOR	FREEZER
Salads (chicken, egg, tuna, ham, macaroni)	3 – 5 days	Does not freeze well
Luncheon meat	3 – 5 days	1-2 months
Hamburger or other ground meats	1 – 2 days	3-4 months
Fresh beef, veal, lamb or pork		
Steaks	3 – 5 days	6 – 12 months
Chops	3 – 5 days	4 – 6 months
Roasts	3 – 5 days	4 – 12 months
Fresh poultry		
Whole	1 – 2 days	1 year
Pieces	1 – 2 days	9 months
Soups or stews (vegetables or meats included)	3 – 4 days	2 – 6 months
Leftovers		
Cooked meat or poultry	3 – 4 days	2 – 6 months
Pizza	3 – 4 days	1 – 2 months
Eggs		
Raw in shell	3 – 5 weeks	Does not freeze well
Raw egg whites	2 – 4 days	12 months
Hard boiled	1 week	Do not freeze
Egg substitutes liquid (unopened)	10 days	12 months
Egg substitutes liquid (opened)	3 days	Do not freeze
Casseroles with eggs	3 – 4 days	2 – 3 months (after baking)
Eggnog (purchased)	3 – 5 days	6 months
Eggnog (homemade)	2 – 4 days	Do not freeze
Quiche with filling	3 – 4 days	1 – 2 months (after baking)

Source: <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/storagetimes.html> (accessed 9/23/14)