



FOOD POISONING

Food poisoning is caused by bacteria, a type of germ that can make you sick. Bacteria can grow in some foods if they are not prepared, cooked, or stored properly. If you eat a food that has bacteria in it, you may get sick. You cannot see and may not smell or taste bacteria that cause food poisoning.

Food poisoning can make you feel like you have the flu. It can cause diarrhea and an upset stomach. Food poisoning rarely causes death. Food poisoning can be harmful to babies, children, the elderly, pregnant women, and those in poor health.

The best way to help keep your family safe from food poisoning is to follow this rule:

KEEP COLD FOODS COLD

AND

KEEP HOT FOODS HOT!

Learn how to prepare, store, and cook foods safely by following these safety tips:

Shopping for Food

- Buy foods with the latest “sell-by” or expiration date.
- Do not buy canned goods with bulges, leaks, or dents
- Put cold, frozen, and hot foods in your shopping cart last.
- Wrap meat and poultry in plastic bags so their juices do not leak onto other foods.
- Foods that belong in the refrigerator or freezer should go in as soon as you get home.

Storing Foods Safely

- If you are not going to use fresh meat, poultry, or fish within a few days, freeze them.
- Use fresh or thawed meats as soon as you can:
 - Store fresh beef, lamb roasts, and steaks no longer than 4 days in the refrigerator.
 - Store veal or pork roasts no longer than 3 days in the refrigerator.
 - Store poultry and ground meat no longer than 2 days in the refrigerator.

IN A POISONING
EMERGENCY, CALL
24-HOURS A DAY,
7 DAYS A WEEK:

1-800-222-1222

Teletype for the
deaf and hearing
Impaired only:

TDD 404-616-9287

Preparing and Cooking Foods Safely

- Wash your hands, kitchen tools, cutting boards, and counters with warm, soapy water before and after handling raw foods.
- Use plastic or tempered glass cutting boards as they are easy to clean.
- Wash all fruits and vegetables before eating.
- Keep raw meats away from fruits, vegetables, and cooked food. Do not put them on the same plate.
- Thaw foods in the refrigerator or microwave. Do not thaw them on the counter top. If you must thaw in a hurry, put the food in a closed plastic bag and soak in cold water.

Preparing and Cooking Foods Safely Continued

- Do not eat raw or undercooked meats, poultry, or eggs. Cook them until they are done:
 - Cook red meat to an internal temperature at or about 150°F - 165°F.
 - Cook chicken until the juices look clear, not pink, about 170°F - 180°F.
 - Cook fish until it flakes.
 - Cook egg whites and yolks until they are firm, not runny.



Serving and Cleaning Up Safely

- When you are finished eating, refrigerate or freeze any leftovers. Do not eat cooked foods left at room temperature for more than 2 hours or more than 1 hour on very hot days.
- Store leftovers in small dishes so they can cool quickly.
- Reheat leftovers to an internal temperature of 165°F.



FOOD MYTHS AND FACTS OF HOME COOKED MEALS

Put Heat on Harmful Bacteria

1 in 6 Americans (48 million people) suffer from food poisoning each year, resulting in thousands of hospitalizations and deaths.



MYTH

"If I microwave food, the microwave kills the bacteria, so the food is safe."



FACT

HARMFUL BACTERIA MAY REMAIN

Harmful bacteria may remain if food heats unevenly. Be sure to follow cooking instructions including rotating, stirring, and letting food stand when indicated.

MYTH

"I don't need to use a food thermometer. I can tell when my food is cooked by looking at it or checking the temperature with my finger."



FACT

YOU NEED TO USE A FOOD THERMOMETER

Color, texture and steaming are not indicators that a food is safe to eat. The only sure way to know food is safely cooked is to use a food thermometer.

MYTH

"I can't re-freeze foods after I have thawed them—I have to cook them or throw them away."



FACT

RAW FOODS MAY BE SAFELY RE-FROZEN

If raw foods have been thawed in the refrigerator, they may be safely re-frozen without cooking for later use. Never re-freeze foods that have been thawed in the microwave or in cool water. Never thaw raw foods by letting them sit on the kitchen counter.

MYTH

"Of course I wash all bagged lettuce and greens because it might make me sick if I don't."



FACT

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WASH PRE-WASHED GREENS

While it is important to thoroughly wash most fruits and vegetables, if packaged greens are labeled "ready-to-eat," "washed," or "triple washed" then the product does NOT need to be washed at home.

4 STEPS TO FOOD SAFETY

CLEAN



SEPARATE



COOK



CHILL

