

# Food Safety Tips

## Contents

1. Food Safety Facts on Leftovers
2. Safe Food Handling
3. Safe Cooking
4. Quiz



## FOOD SAFETY FACTS ON LEFTOVERS

### What is foodborne illness?

Food contaminated by bacteria, viruses and parasites can make you sick. Many people have had foodborne illness and not even known it. It's sometimes called food poisoning, and it can feel like the flu. Symptoms may include the following:

- stomach cramps
- nausea
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- fever

Symptoms can start soon after eating contaminated food, but they can hit up to a month or more later. For some people, especially young children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems, foodborne illness can be very dangerous.

Public health experts estimate that there are 11 to 13 million cases of foodborne illness in Canada every year. Most cases of foodborne illness can be prevented by using safe food handling practices and using a food thermometer to check that your food is cooked to a safe internal temperature!

### Storing leftovers

It's always important to keep foods out of the danger zone, which is between 4°C (40°F) and 60°C (140°F) to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria. To do this, just keep hot foods hot, at least 60°C (140°F) and keep cold foods cold at 4°C (40°F) or lower.

- Food should not be left in the temperature danger zone for more than two hours. Chill and store leftovers properly within 2 hours of serving.
- Discard leftovers if the food has been sitting at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
- Before and after handling leftovers, wash your hands and sanitize all utensils, dishes and work surfaces with a mild bleach solution (5 ml/1 tsp. bleach per 750 ml/3 cups water).
- Never remove a large pot of food (such as soup, stew, or pasta sauce) from the stove and place it directly in the refrigerator. Large masses of food can take hours or days to chill properly. A slow cooling process provides an ideal environment for the growth of harmful bacteria.
- Refrigerate all leftovers promptly in uncovered, shallow containers so they cool quickly. Refrigerate once steaming stops and leave the lid or wrap loosely until the food is cooled to refrigeration temperature. Avoid overstocking the refrigerator to allow cool air to circulate freely.
- Very hot items can be cooled at room temperature until they stop steaming, prior to being refrigerated. Frequent stirring accelerates the cooling at this stage. Food will cool faster in an uncovered, shallow container.
- Always put leftovers in clean containers and never mix them with fresh food.

- An effective way to cool and store hot leftovers is to lay them flat in zipper-type plastic bags. Although the bags must be closed securely, food cools quickly due to the greater surface area exposed to the refrigerated air.
- Do not overcrowd your refrigerator. Leave airspace around containers to allow circulation of cold air. This will help ensure rapid, even cooling.
- Eat leftovers within four days for best quality or freeze for later use. Date leftovers to help identify the contents and to ensure that they are not stored too long.
- Reheating leftovers
- Reheat solid leftovers to at least 74°C (165°F).
- Bring gravies, soups and sauces to a full, rolling boil and stir during the process.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions when reheating commercially prepared foods in a microwave.
- Discard uneaten leftovers after they have been reheated.
- NEVER use your nose, eyes or taste buds to judge the safety of food.
- You cannot tell if a food may cause foodborne illness by its look, smell or taste.
- And remember: "If in doubt, throw it out!"

### Safeguarding Canada's Food Supply

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is the Government of Canada's science-based regulator for animal health, plant protection and, in partnership with Health Canada, food safety.

\*<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/concen/tipcon/leftove.shtml>



# Safe Food Handling

This fact sheet provides basic information only. It must not take the place of medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always talk to a healthcare professional about any health concerns you have, and before you make any changes to your diet, lifestyle or treatment.

Thousands of people in Ontario suffer from food poisoning each year. Most cases of food poisoning occur when people eat food containing bacterial toxins.

Bacteria cannot be detected by sight, smell or taste and at the right temperature, can multiply to millions in a few short hours, which may lead to illness.

Symptoms associated with food poisoning may include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever or cramps.

The good news, however, is that most cases of food poisoning can be avoided altogether if food is handled properly.

## When you shop

### Buy cold food last and get it home fast :

- On a shopping trip, buy your food last - cold and frozen food last of all. Take food straight home to the refrigerator. Never leave food in a hot car !
- Do not buy food in poor condition. Make sure refrigerated food is cold to the touch. Frozen food should be rock-solid. Canned goods should be free of dents, cracks or bulging lids, which can indicate a serious food poisoning threat.
- Do not buy anything you would not use before the "best before" date.

## When you store food

### Keep food safe - refrigerate :

- Check the temperature in your refrigerator with an appliance thermometer - you can buy one at a variety or hardware store. To keep bacteria from multiplying, the refrigerator should run at  $4^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $40^{\circ}\text{F}$ ). The freezer unit should be at  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $0^{\circ}\text{F}$ ). Generally, keep your refrigerator as cold as you can without freezing your milk or lettuce.
- Freeze fresh meat, poultry or fish immediately if you cannot use it within a few days.
- Put packages of raw meat, poultry or fish on plates before refrigerating so their juices will not drip on to other food. Raw juices often contain bacteria.

## When you prepare food

### Keep everything clean and thaw food in the refrigerator :

- Always wash your hands in warm soapy water before preparing food.
- Bacteria can live in kitchen towels, sponges and cloths. Wash these often.
- Keep raw meat, poultry and fish and their juices away from other food. Wash your hands, cutting board and knife in hot, soapy water after cutting up chicken and raw meat and before using the utensils for other food.
- Thaw food in the refrigerator,



- microwave or oven, not on the kitchen counter. At room temperature, bacteria can grow in the outer layers of food before the inside thaws. Marinate in the refrigerator too. When thawing food in microwave ovens, be sure to use microwavable containers.

### **When you're cooking Cook thoroughly :**

- It takes thorough cooking to kill harmful bacteria. You're taking chances when you eat meat, poultry or fish that are raw or only partly cooked. Hamburger that is red in the middle, and rare and medium-rare steak and roast beef are undercooked from the safety standpoint.
- Cook red meat and poultry to the temperature indicated in the table below. Use a meat thermometer to check that they're cooked all the way through.
- Red meat is done when it's brown or grey inside. Poultry is cooked when its juices run clear. Fish flakes with a fork.
- When you cook ahead, divide large portions of food into small, shallow containers for refrigeration. This ensures safe, rapid cooling.

### **Microwave safely :**

The microwave oven is a great time-saver but has one food safety disadvantage. It sometimes leaves cold spots in food. Bacteria may survive in these spots. Be sure to :

- Cover food with a lid or plastic wrap that is approved for microwaving. The steam can aid thorough cooking. Leave a small section uncovered so steam can

escape, and do not let the wrap touch the food.

- Stir and rotate food for even cooking. If there is no turntable in the oven, rotate the dish by hand once or twice during cooking.
- Observe the "standing" time called for in recipe or package directions. Food finishes cooking during the standing time.
- Use a meat thermometer to check that food is done. Insert it at several spots.

### **When you serve food**

#### **Never leave it out for more than two hours:**

- Use clean dishes and utensils to serve food, not those you used when preparing the raw food.
- Never leave perishable food out of the refrigerator for more than two hours. Bacteria that can cause food poisoning grow quickly at warm temperatures.
- Pack lunches in insulated carriers with a cold pack. Warn children never to leave lunches in direct sun or on a warm radiator.
- Carry picnic food in a cooler with a cold pack. When possible, put the cooler in the shade. Keep the lid on as much as you can.
- Party time ? Keep cold party food on ice or serve it on platters from the refrigerator.
- Divide hot party food into smaller serving platters. Keep platters refrigerated until it's time to warm them up for serving.

### **When you handle leftovers**

#### **Use small containers for quick cooling :**

- Divide large amounts of leftovers into small, shallow containers for quick



cooling in the refrigerator. Do not pack the refrigerator - cool air must circulate to keep food safe.

- With stuffed poultry or meats, remove stuffing and refrigerate it in separate containers.

### Reheating food:

- Bring sauces, soups and gravy to a boil. Heat other leftovers thoroughly to 74°C (165°F).
- Microwave leftovers with an approved lid or plastic wrap for thorough heating.

### Kept it too long?

#### When in doubt, throw it out :

Safe refrigerator and freezer storage times for many common foods are shown in the "Cold Storage" table below, but what about something you forgot about and may have kept too long ?

- Never taste food that looks or smells strange to see if you can still use it. Throw it out.
- Is it mouldy ? The mould you see is only the tip of the iceberg. Its poisons are found under the surface of the food. You can sometimes save hard cheese and salamis and firm fruits and vegetables by cutting the mould out - remove a large area around it. But most mouldy food should be discarded.

### Is it food poisoning?

If you or a family member develops nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever or cramps, you could have food poisoning. It's not always easy to tell - symptoms can appear anywhere from 30 minutes to two weeks later.

Most often, though, people get sick within four to 48 hours after eating bad food. In more serious cases, food poisoning victims may have nervous system problems like paralysis, double vision or trouble swallowing or breathing. If symptoms are severe or the victim is very young, old, pregnant or already ill, call your doctor or go to the hospital right away.

For more information on food handling, call your local health department listed in the blue pages of your telephone directory.

### Chemical Storage

Household chemicals like cleaning compounds should be stored separately and away from food. Household pesticides should not be stored in the kitchen or in other areas where food is stored.

**Caution : All household chemical containers should be properly labeled and identified.**

### If your power is off Your freezer :

- Without power, a full upright or chest freezer will keep everything frozen for about 2 days. A half-full freezer will keep food frozen for 1 day.
- If power will be coming back on soon, you can make the food last longer by keeping the door shut as much as possible. Ice can keep the freezer cold.
- If power will be off for a longer time period, take food to friends' or neighbours' freezers if you can. If in doubt, throw it out.

### Your refrigerator-freezer combination :

- Without power, the refrigerator section will keep food cool for 4-6 hours,

depending on the kitchen temperature. Ice can keep food on the refrigerator shelves cooler.

- If your food has thawed, it can be re-frozen if it still contains ice crystals or feels "refrigerator-cold." Discard any thawed food that has risen to room temperature and remained there for 2 hours or more. Discard any food with a strange colour or odor immediately.

## Government of Ontario

For information about health services and resources :

[www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca)

For consumer-friendly health tips and information :

[www.HealthyOntario.com](http://www.HealthyOntario.com)

INFOline: 1-877-234-4343;

TTY: 1-800-387-5559

Telehealth Ontario:

1-866-797-0000; TTY 1-866-797-0007

INFOline is open during business hours and can provide general information on healthcare.

Telehealth Ontario is a 24/7 service which uses nurse practitioners to answer your immediate health concerns.



### Internal Food Cooking Temperatures(Use a meat thermometer to check)

Product	Variety	Celsius	Fahrenheit
Ground Meat and Meat Mixtures	Turkey, chicken	74	165
	Veal, beef, lamb, pork	71	160
Beef	All cuts	60 - 74	140 - 165
	All cuts	60 - 74	140 - 165
Veal	All cuts	60 - 74	140 - 165
	All cuts	71	160
Pork	Chicken, whole	82	180
	Turkey, whole	82	180
Poultry	Poultry breasts	74	165
	Poultry thighs, wings	Cook until juices run clear	Cook until juices run clear
	Stuffing (cooked alone, or in bird)	74	165
Ham	Duck, goose, pheasant	82	180
	Fresh (raw)	71	160
	Pre-cooked (to reheat)	60	140
Seafoods	Fish, shellfish and other seafood	70	158

### Cold storage

Product	Variety	Refrigerator (4°C)	Freezer (-18°C)
Eggs	Fresh, in shell	3 weeks	Do not freeze.
	Raw yolks, whites	2-4 days	4 months
	Hard-cooked	1 week	Do not freeze well.
	Liquid pasteurized eggs or egg substitute - opened	3 days	Do not freeze.
	Liquid pasteurized eggs or egg substitute - unopened	10 days	4 months
Mayonnaise	commercial (refrigerate after opening)	2 months	Do not freeze.
TV Dinners, Frozen Casseroles	All brands	Keep frozen until ready to serve.	3-4 months
Deli and Vacuum-Packed Products Store prepared (or homemade)	Egg, chicken, tuna, ham, macaroni, salads	2-3 days	These products do not freeze well.
	Stuffed pork and lamb chops, stuffed chicken breasts	1 day	These products do not freeze well.
	Store-cooked convenience meals	1-2 days	These products do not freeze well.
	Commercial brand vacuum-packed dinners	2 weeks unopened	These products do not freeze well.
Soups and Stews	Vegetable or meat-added	3-4 days	2-3 months
Hamburger, Ground and Stew Meats	Hamburger and stew meats	1-2 days	3-4 months
	Ground turkey, veal, pork, lamb and mixture of them	1-2 days	3-4 months
Hot Dogs	Hot dogs, opened package	1 week	In freezer wrap, 1-2 months
	Hot dogs unopened package	2 weeks	
Lunch Meats	Lunch meats opened	3-5 days	In freezer wrap, 1-2 months
	Lunch meats unopened	2 weeks	
Seafoods	Fish, shellfish and other seafood	1-2 days	4-6 months

Based on materials provided by Scarborough Health Department and the  
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service



# safe Cooking

Good cooks keep everything in the kitchen clean - this is called food hygiene

## BEFORE YOU START

Wash your hands with warm water and soap then dry them. Make sure your nails are clean:

- ✓ before you start to cook
- ✓ after handling raw food
- ✓ after going to the toilet
- ✓ when you cough, sneeze or blow your nose



## Do not lick your fingers!

Even though you can't see them, microbes on your hands can quickly spread and make you or other people ill. Keep your hands clean.



Did you know that a sneeze can travel at over 100 miles per hour!

An apron keeps food clean and protects your clothes. Look at people who handle food in shops. What do they wear on their heads? Why?



What could you do to make sure your food technology area is a safe place?

## CLEANING UP

- ✓ Wash and tidy up as you go along.
- ✓ Keep surfaces clean.
- ✓ Always use clean cloths and tea towels.
- ✓ Wash all utensils with hot, clean, soapy water.
- ✓ Begin with the cleanest dishes.
- ✓ Use a clean tea towel or paper towels for drying.
- ✓ Wrap up food waste and seal in a bag before throwing away.

- ✓ Put on an apron before you start cooking.
- ✓ Tie back long hair.
- ✓ Do not wear jewellery.
- ✓ Do not sneeze or cough over food - this can spread infections.
- ✓ Make sure your work area is clean and tidy.

- ✓ Do not rush or run in the cookery area.
- ✓ Keep tidy and organised.
- ✓ Take care with hot pans and dishes.
- ✓ Be careful with sharp knives.
- ✓ Think! - keep your mind on what you are doing.
- ✓ Use special oven gloves when moving hot dishes or pans.
- ✓ Listen to instructions and follow them carefully.

Water should be hot but still comfortable to your hands. Cold water does not clean well. Can you think why?



Never use a damp or dirty tea towel. Can you think why?





## Food Safety Quiz: True or False

1. When shopping, buy cold food items at the end  
True or False
2. No matter how much you have in your fridge, all fridges are designed to spread the cold evenly  
True or False
3. Food should be kept between 4 Degrees Celsius and 60 Degrees Celsius  
True or False
4. Left overs can be left in the danger zone for up to 3 hours  
True or False
5. Fish is all the way cooked when it sticks together well  
True or False
6. Sauce, soup, and gravy should all be brought to a boil when re-heating  
True or False
7. Heating left overs, then re-heating them again is perfectly safe  
True or False
8. Nausea, vomiting, and memory loss are all signs of food poisoning  
True or False
9. Without power the refrigerator will keep food good for 4-6 hours  
True or false





## Food and Safety Quiz Answers: True or False

1. True

2. False- if the fridge is over-packed the cold will not spread evenly

3. False

4. False- 2 hours

5. False- it flakes

6. True

7. False

8. False- memory loss is not

9. True