

Summary

The number-one cause of foodborne illness in the home is food that is held at improper temperatures. Remember to purchase, store, and prepare food “by the numbers.” Always keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold, and use food thermometers such as the ones shown below to verify that your and your family’s food is safe. You also should wash hands often and avoid cross-contamination by keeping raw and cooked foods separate.



Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences research, extension, and resident education programs are funded in part by Pennsylvania counties, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

This publication is available from the Publications Distribution Center, The Pennsylvania State University, 112 Agricultural Administration Building, University Park, PA 16802. For information telephone (814) 865-6713.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of Congress May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Pennsylvania Legislature. T. R. Alter, Director of Cooperative Extension, The Pennsylvania State University.

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. The Pennsylvania State University does not discriminate against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Pennsylvania State University, 201 Willard Building, University Park PA 16802-2801; Tel. (814) 865-4700/V; (814) 863-1150/TTY.

© The Pennsylvania State University 2000 10M6/00ps

Tips *on* Preventing Foodborne Illness

PENNSTATE



College of Agricultural Sciences
Cooperative Extension and
Research Facility

Food can be a source of great pleasure, but it also can be dangerous if it is not prepared correctly.

Improper kitchen practices can lead to the spread of bacteria and other disease-causing organisms. Use the following recommendations to ensure that your kitchen is clean and the food you serve is safe.

Storage Strategies

- Maintain refrigerator temperature at 40°F or lower
- Cover, label, and date foods
- Avoid refrigerator overload
- Keep frozen foods frozen solid

Separate Safely

- Use separate cutting boards for meats and vegetables
- Keep raw meats separate from other foods
- Store foods away from cleaning supplies
- Wash and sanitize countertops and sinks
- Use a clean plate for cooked meats
- Thaw raw meat on a tray in the bottom of the refrigerator

Wash Hands Often

How?

- Use soap and warm, running water
- Scrub for 20 seconds
- Rinse
- Dry with a paper towel

When?

- Before preparing or eating food
- After handling raw food
- After using the bathroom or changing diapers
- After playing with pets and animals

Cook Correctly

- Use a clean thermometer when checking food temperatures
- Cook foods to the following recommended temperatures:

Chicken	180°F
Ground chicken	165°F
Ground beef, eggs, pork	160°F
Fish, beef	145°F
- Reheat to 165°F.
- When cooking food in the microwave, cover, stir, and rotate while cooking, and let stand 2 minutes afterward

Cooling Counts

- Set your refrigerator at 40°F or below and your freezer at 0°F or lower
- Remember the “2-hour rule”—refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared food, and leftovers within 2 hours
- Place leftovers in shallow containers (2 to 3 inches deep) for quick cooling in the refrigerator
- Marinate foods in the refrigerator
- Thaw food in the refrigerator, under cold running tap water, or in the microwave. Never defrost food on the kitchen counter

