

NUTRITION KEYNOTES

Tips on Food Safety



To protect you from germs that can cause diarrhea, vomiting, and fever.

DOs

- Put meat, poultry, and dairy products in the grocery cart last. Put them in plastic bags to prevent juices from dripping onto other foods. Get them home and into the refrigerator or freezer as soon as possible. Use a cooler in your car on hot days.
- Wash your hands with warm water and soap for about 20 seconds before preparing foods and after handling raw meat, poultry, or seafood.
- Wash **all** fresh fruits and vegetables with cool water before eating, cutting, or using in food preparation. Rinse meat or poultry prior to preparation.
- Wash the top of canned foods before opening.
- Use plastic gloves to handle foods if you have cuts and sores.
- Use different cutting boards for cooked and raw foods. Wash all cutting boards with soap and hot water after each use.
- Cook meat thoroughly to at least 160°F for beef, lamb, or pork or 165°F for poultry. Use a food thermometer to test for doneness, if necessary.
- Keep the temperature of the refrigerator below 40°F and the temperature of the freezer at 0°F.
- Keep cooked foods hot (above 140°F) until they are served.
- Use hot water to wash dishes.
- Use different towels to dry your dishes and hands.
- After each use, clean your kitchen counters thoroughly with bleach or soap and hot water. Machine wash dish rags and sponges with a chlorine bleach solution or run through the dishwasher before reusing.

DON'Ts

- Do not use the following foods without cooking thoroughly:
 - Eggs (use pasteurized egg products or substitutes)
 - Fish, shellfish, meat, or steak
 - Unpasteurized milk, cheese, or juice
- Do not serve cooked meats or poultry on the same plate on which raw meat or poultry was kept.
- Do not reuse a marinade.
- Do not leave hot foods out to cool down to room temperature. Put them in the refrigerator or freezer right away.
- Do not leave food out for more than 2 hours; always refrigerate leftovers. In hot weather (80°F or above), reduce this time to 1 hour.
- Do not use food after the expiration date on the label. Do not use canned foods if dented, bulging, or leaking.
- Do not taste anything you think might be rotten, moldy, or spoiled. If in doubt, throw it away.
- Do not thaw meat or poultry on the counter. Instead, defrost in the refrigerator or microwave or put in a sealed plastic bag under cold running water.
- Do not forget to allow for “standing” time of microwave foods to ensure thorough heating. Follow package cooking directions exactly.

For more information, please contact your registered dietitian or local Health Education Department.