

CLEAN, SEPARATE, COOK, CHILL

Myth: Leftovers are safe to eat until they smell bad. Find the facts in the Chill Food Fact section below.

You may be surprised to learn that the kinds of bacteria that cause food poisoning do not affect the look, smell, or taste of food. And food poisoning can even send you to the hospital! Help keep your family safe with these four simple steps.



Wash hands and surfaces often; wash all fruits and vegetables under running water.

Food Fact: Illness-causing bacteria can be anywhere, so it's important that everything that touches food is clean, including hands, surfaces, cutting boards, and utensils.

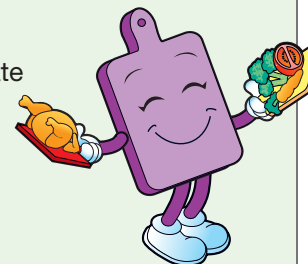
Safety Tip: When washing your hands, wet them and apply soap. Scrub hands, wrists, and between fingers for at least 20 seconds (that's singing "Happy Birthday" twice). Rinse well under running water, and then dry.



Separate raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs from ready-to-eat foods.

Food Fact: Bacteria from meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs can spread to other foods. To prevent cross contamination, keep these foods separate while shopping and when storing them in your fridge.

Safety Tip: Use separate cutting boards and plates for fruits and vegetables and for raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs.



Cook food to the right temperature and use a food thermometer to determine doneness.

Food Fact: Cooked food is safe only after it has been heated to a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria. Color and texture alone won't tell you whether your food is done, so always use a food thermometer.

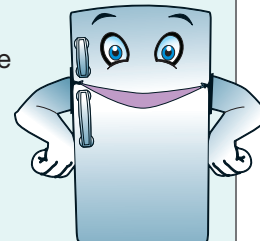
Safety Tip: Different foods have different minimum cooking temperatures. Print out this useful guide: FoodSafety.gov/keep/charts/mintemp.html.



Chill raw meat and poultry, as well as cooked leftovers, promptly.

Food Fact: The kinds of bacteria that cause food poisoning do not affect the look, smell, or taste of food, so perishable foods need to be refrigerated within two hours, or within one hour if it's above 90° F outside.

Safety Tip: Thaw foods in the fridge, under cold running water, or in the microwave but never on the counter. Eat refrigerated leftovers within 3–4 days.



Find more food safety guidelines at FoodSafety.gov.