



COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE • COMMUNITY HEALTH AGENCY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN NO. 96-04A

DISTRICT ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIVISION

FOOD SAFETY IN YOUR KITCHEN

Here are some quick tips to help prevent bacteria from taking over your kitchen and some easy techniques you can practice at home to avoid a food borne illness from hitting your family.

WHEN YOU SHOP

- Buy cold food last and get it home fast.
- Never leave food in a hot car.
- Don't buy cans with severe dents, bulging lids, or missing labels.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE HOME

- Refrigerate/freeze meat as soon as you arrive home.
- Set refrigerator dial at 40°F or below and freezer at 0°F or below.
- Thaw meat only in the refrigerator or microwave (on "defrost").
- Place raw meat in a container to prevent leaking juices, and store it on the lowest shelf of the refrigerator.

BEFORE PREPARING THE FAMILY MEAL

- Wash hands with soap and hot water and dry on a paper towel or clean, dry cloth.
- Thoroughly wash all food preparation surfaces to eliminate existing bacteria.
- Use only clean knives and cooking utensils.
- Sanitize utensils and cutting boards between cutting raw and cooked foods to prevent cross-contamination.
- Do not leave food out on the counter. If interrupted during preparation, place cold food back in the refrigerator until ready to use.
- Wash all fruits and vegetables before eating.

COOK IT SAFE

- Cook ground beef until it is no longer pink, and juices run clear.
- Cook solid cut beefsteaks or a roast to a minimum of 158°F (more rare) to 170°F (well done).
- Thoroughly reheat precooked food to 165°F before serving.

WHEN SERVING

- Use clean dishes and utensils to serve food, not those used in preparation.
- Return grilled foods on a clean plate, not the one that held the raw meat, fish, or poultry.
- Carry picnic food and lunches in a cooler with a cold pack. Store out of the direct sun and keep lids on until it's time to eat!
- Never leave perishable food out of the refrigerator for an extended period of time.

LEFTOVERS

- Divide up large amounts of leftovers into small, shallow containers to allow quick cooling in the refrigerator.
- Cover all containers and do not stack containers on top of uncovered food.
- Always remove stuffing from meat and poultry before storing and reheating.
- Watch out for moldy foods. Mold seen on the surface indicates more unseen mold on the inside of the food. Although hard cheese, salamis, and firm fruit is probably okay when a LARGE area around the mold is cut away, most moldy food should be discarded.
- Never taste food that looks or smells "strange".

WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!!!

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COLD STORAGE

The following time limits will help keep refrigerated food from spoiling or becoming dangerous to eat, and keep frozen food in top quality*.

Product	Refrigerator (40°F)	Freezer (0°F)
Eggs		
Fresh, in shell	3 weeks	Don't Freeze
Raw yolks, white	2-4 days	1 year
Hard cooked	1 week	Don't freeze well
Liquid pasteurized eggs or egg substitutes		
Opened	3 days	Don't freeze
Unopened	10 days	1 year
Mayonnaise, commercial		
Refrigerate after opening	2 months	Don't freeze
TV Dinners, Frozen Casseroles		
Keep frozen until ready to serve	N/A	3-4 months
Deli & Vacuum-Packed Products		
Store-prepared (or homemade) egg, chicken, tuna, ham, macaroni salads	3-5 days	All of these products don't freeze well
Pre-stuffed pork & lamb chops, chicken breasts stuffed with dressing	1 day	
Store-cooked convenience meals	1-2 days	
Commercial brand vacuum-packed dinners with USDA seal	2 weeks, unopened	
Soups & Stews		
Vegetable or meat-added	3-4 days	2-3 months
Hamburger, Ground & Stew Meats		
Hamburger & stew meats	1-2 days	3-4 months

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Ground turkey, veal, pork, lamb & mixtures of them	1-2 days	3-4 months
Hotdogs		
opened package	1 week	
unopened package	2 weeks	
Lunch meats		
opened	3-5 days	In freezer wrap, 1-2 months
unopened	2 weeks	
Bacon & Sausage		
Bacon	7 days	1 month
Sausage, raw from pork, beef, turkey	1-2 days	1-2 months
Smoked breakfast links, patties	7 days	1-2 months
Hard sausage-pepperoni, jerky sticks	2-3 weeks	1-2 months
Ham, Corned Beef		
Corned beef in pouch with pickling juices	5-7 days	Drained, wrapped 1 month
Ham, canned - label says keep refrigerated	6-9 months	Don't freeze
Ham, fully cooked - whole	7 days	1-2 months
Ham, fully cooked - half	3-5 days	1-2 months
Ham, fully cooked - slices	3-4 days	1-2 months
Fresh Meat		
Steaks, beef	3-5 days	6-12 months
Chops, pork	3-5 days	4-6 months
Chops, lamb	3-5 days	6-9 months
Roasts, beef	3-5 days	6-12 months
Roasts, lamb	3-5 days	6-9 months

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Roasts, pork & veal	3-5 days	4-6 months
Variety meats - tongue, brain, kidneys, liver, heart, chitterlings	1-2 days	3-4 months
Meat Leftovers		
Cooked meat and meat dishes	3-4 days	2-3 months
Gravy and meat broth	1-2 days	2-3 months
Fresh Poultry		
Chicken or turkey, whole	1-2 days	1 year
Chicken or turkey pieces	1-2 days	9 months
Giblets	1-2 days	3-4 months
Cooked Poultry, Leftover		
Fried chicken	3-4 days	4 months
Cooked poultry dishes	3-4 days	4-6 months
Pieces, plain	3-4 days	4 months
Pieces covered with broth, gravy	1-2 days	6 months
Chicken nuggets, patties	1-2 days	1-3 months

**Information taken from Partnership for Food Safety Education*

*Document available in an alternate format upon request

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