

Food Preparation and safety

Safe steps in food handling, cooking, and storage are essential to prevent food-borne illness.

You cannot see, smell, or taste harmful bacteria that may cause illness. In every step of food preparation, follow these important guidelines to keep you and your food safe:

- **Clean -- Wash hands and surfaces often.**
- **Separate -- Don't cross-contaminate.**
- **Cook -- Cook to proper temperatures.**
- **Chill -- Refrigerate promptly.**
- **Never choose meat or poultry in packaging that is torn or leaking.**
- **Do not buy or eat food past the "Sell-By," "Use-By," or other expiration dates.**

This information is brought to you by the Racine County Triad program. Triad is a co-op of older adults, law enforcement, and other agencies working together to improve the lives of seniors in our community. For more information on Triad, please call 262.886.9612



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Racine County Triad

FOOD PREPARATION AND SAFETY

*Older Adults, Law Enforcement
and Agencies Working Together*



Safety information brought to you
by Triad and the USDA United
States Department of Agriculture
Food Safety and Inspection Service

www.RacineTriad.org

262.886.9612
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Food Preparation Checklist

- ☑ I wash my hands before food preparation and after handling meats, eggs, and other foods to prevent cross-contamination.
- ☑ I thaw meat, fish and poultry in a leak-proof dish in the refrigerator, not out on the counter.
- ☑ If I need to thaw foods quicker I use the proper settings on the microwave or in a leak-proof plastic bag in the sink with cold tap water that is changed every 30 minutes. I then cook immediately after thawing.
- ☑ When marinating meats I do so in a covered dish in the refrigerator .
- ☑ I sanitize cutting boards after use with a solution of 1 teaspoon chlorine bleach in 1 quart of water.
- ☑ I purchase refrigerated or frozen items after selecting the non-perishables.

- ☑ My refrigerator is 40 °F or below and my freezer is at 0 °F or below.
- ☑ I cook or freeze fresh poultry, fish, ground meats, and variety meats within 2 days of purchase; other beef, veal, lamb, or pork, within 3 to 5 days.
- ☑ My perishable food such as meat and poultry are wrapped securely to maintain quality and to prevent meat juices from getting onto other food.
- ☑ I cook ground meats to 160 °F; ground poultry to 165 °F; beef, veal, and lamb steaks, roasts, and chops are cooked to 145 °F; all cuts of fresh pork to 160 °F. ; and whole poultry reaches 180 °F in the thigh and 170 °F in the breast.



- ☑ I discard any food left out at room temperature for more than 2 hours (1 hour if the temperature was above 90 °F).
- ☑ I use cooked leftovers within 4 days.

Other Important Tips

- ☑ To maintain quality when freezing meat and poultry in its original package, wrap the package again with foil or plastic wrap that is recommended for the freezer.
- ☑ Hot food should be held at 140 °F or warmer.
- ☑ Cold food should be held at 40 °F or colder.
- ☑ When serving food at a buffet, keep food hot with chafing dishes, slow cookers, and warming trays. Keep food cold by nesting dishes in bowls of ice or use small serving trays and replace them often.
- ☑ Discard cans that are dented, leaking, bulging, or rusted.



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