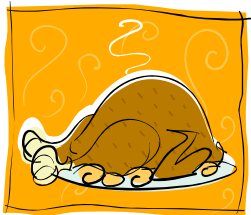


## The Scoop on Food Safety

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Food poisoning happens more than you think. Its symptoms--which include upset stomach, dizziness, diarrhea, and fever--are often mistaken for the flu. Each year approximately 81 million Americans get sick from food borne illness. Don't be a statistic!

In this brochure you will find information regarding safe storage and food handling techniques for food in the cupboard, refrigerator, and freezer. Hopefully this information will help you avoid many common food safety mistakes.



## Thawing

Put foods in a sealable bag or in a dish to collect the juices. Do not thaw foods on the counter. Foods should always be thawed in the refrigerator. This will take additional time so be sure to plan ahead. If you need to thaw foods quickly place in a microwave-safe container and use the defrost setting on the microwave. You can also thaw in cold water if you change the water every 30 minutes. Once meat is thawed be sure to cook right away.

### Thawing times for the refrigerator

- Large roast: 4-7 hours/lb
- Small roast: 3-5 hours/lb
- 1-inch thick package of ground beef: 24 hours
- 1-inch thick steak: 12-14 hours

## Hand-Washing

Wash hands in warm water for 20 seconds. Use plenty of soap between your fingers and the backs of your hands, wrists, and fingernails. Dry hands on a clean towel. Wash before you eat, feed children, or handle or prepare food. When cooking it is especially important to wash your hands between tasks. Wash hands after you:

touch raw food, prepare food, touch eggs, use the restroom, change a diaper, cough or sneeze, blow your nose, handle garbage or dirty dishes, smoke a cigarette, pet animals, use the phone, touch face, air, body, or other people, after touching a cut or sore, or do laundry.

The Complete Food and Nutrition Source (2ed)

Roberta Larson Duyff, American Dietetic Association



# Food Safety and Storage...

Do you  
have the  
411?

## In the cupboard

Most people don't think they need to worry about their dry storage. However, with a little extra care and attention your food's shelf life can be extended and quality and be improved.

- Select clean, dry, and cool places to store dry food. Avoid placing food items next to heat producing appliances which may lower the nutritional quality of the stored food.
  - Rotate food by placing older items near the front of your shelf. This will allow you to preserve the color and texture of your food.
  - Avoid buying or consuming food from cans that are cracked, leak, or bulge. This is a sign of bacteria and could cause severe illness.
  - Store opened food in airtight containers to keep out the bugs.
- NEVER store food near cleaning supplies or garbage. Keep chemicals away from food pre-

## In the refrigerator

- Store food in well sealed containers to avoid moisture loss and absorption of refrigerator odors. This will also help fruits and vegetables last longer.
- Put opened canned food in a clean container, such as a Tupperware or well-wrapped bowl. This will preserve the foods taste and quality.
- Place raw meat, poultry, and fish on the lowest refrigerator shelf. This is the coldest shelf and will keep raw meat from dripping on other refrigerator items. Keep them separated from other foods by placing in a bag or a pan.



- Store food promptly after buying or eating. Food should never stay on the counter for longer than two hours.
- Store large amounts of food in small containers to ensure they cool fast enough to avoid bacterial growth.
- Don't overload your fridge this will prevent cold air from circulating.

**When in doubt, throw it out!**

## In the freezer

Most people think that bacteria can be killed by freezing. However, freezing does not kill bacteria rather it stops bacterial growth. Therefore precautions in the freezer must be taken.



- The colder the better!
- When storing unprepared food in the freezer keep food in its' original package, as it is usually airtight. When refreezing use foil or sealable plastic bags (Ziploc) do not use plastic wrap. The more food is handled the greater opportunity there is for bacterial contamination.
- Label food before storage with date, food name, and number of serving to easily identify food and determine freshness.

Rotate foods regularly keeping oldest foods in the front and similar foods together.