



FOOD AS MEDICINE

FOOD SAFETY

Access to safe, healthy food is important for good health. Food safety, nutrition, and food security are all connected. When food is not safe, it can cause sickness, poor nutrition, and long-term health problems.

Sometimes food has germs that can make you sick. Food poisoning can happen when bacteria, viruses, parasites, mold, toxins, or allergens get into food. This can occur during processing, harvesting, shipping, at the store, or even in your home. Not washing your hands before eating is one of the main ways germs enter the body. Practicing good food safety helps keep you, your family, friends, and community safe.

Click the items below to learn tips about basic food safety, staying safe during different seasons and emergencies, and how to make food safety fit your budget—and more.

Please click the topics below to learn more:

- [> Food safety basics](#)
- [> Prevention steps & strategies](#)
- [> Food safety - By Event, Season & Emergencies](#)



FOOD SAFETY BASICS



Food can sometimes be contaminated with germs. You may swallow these germs when:

- Food isn't cooked properly.
- Germs from food spread to your hands, surfaces, or other foods (cross contamination).
- Food isn't refrigerated properly.

Some foods are more likely to contain harmful germs including:

- Raw or undercooked poultry, meat, seafood, or eggs
- Raw or undercooked sprouts
- Unwashed fruits and vegetables
- Cut melon
- Unpasteurized milk, juice, cider, or soft cheese
- Raw dough or raw batter made with uncooked flour

Common symptoms of food poisoning:

- Stomach pain
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Vomiting

Some groups are also at higher risk of developing symptoms of food borne illness including older adults, people with autoimmune diseases, those who are pregnant, and children under 5. Click [here](#) to learn more.

HOW TO STRETCH YOUR BUDGET WITH FOOD SAFETY TIPS

Save Money with Smart Food Safety

- [Safe Shopping](#): Learn how to shop smart and avoid contamination.
- [Proper Storage](#): Extend shelf life and reduce waste.
 - Safe Food Storage: Proper food storage can extend the shelf life of food while ensuring it remains safe to eat. Doing so can also save money and prevent food waste.
- [Where to store foods in the kitchen](#)- if you want to maximize the life of your food here are some tips from registered dieticians who are experts in food storage.
 - [Where to store foods two-pager](#)
- [FoodKeeper App](#): Use this webpage and app to help you use food while at peak quality and reduce waste.
- **Freezing 101:**
 - [Freezing 101](#)
- [Food Product Dating Tips](#)



FOOD SAFETY - PREVENTION STEPS & STRATEGIES



Practicing food safety can help prevent foodborne illness.

[4 Simple C's to Food Safety \(Clean, Cross Contamination, Cook & Chill\)](#)

Follow these 4 steps to protect yourself and your family:

1. Clean: Wash Hands, Surfaces & Produce

- Wash hands for **20 seconds** with soap and water.
- Clean utensils, cutting boards, and counters with hot, soapy water.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables under running water.
- Don't wash raw meat, poultry, or seafood—it spreads germs.
- With canned foods, remember to clean lids before opening.

[Food Safety Quick Tips: Clean](#)



2. Cross-Contamination- Separate your food

- Use separate cutting boards for raw meat and produce.
- Keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood away from other foods in your cart and fridge.
- Store raw items in sealed containers to prevent leaks.

[Food Safety Quick Tips: Separate](#)



3. Cook: Use a Food Thermometer

- Cook food to the right internal temperature to kill germs.
- Don't rely on color or texture—**use a thermometer**.
- Reheat leftovers to **165°F**.
- Let microwaved food sit to finish cooking evenly.
- Keep food out of the temperature danger zone. Leaving food out too long at room temperature can cause bacteria to grow to dangerous levels that can cause illness. Bacteria grow most rapidly in the range of temperatures between 40 °F and 140 °F which is called the "Danger Zone."

[Safe Cooking Food Safety Quick Tips: Temperatures](#)

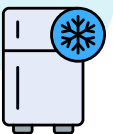
[Food Safety Quick Tips: Microwave Safety Temperature Danger Zone](#)



4. Chill: Refrigerate and Freeze Properly

- Refrigerate perishable food within **2 hours** of cooking or purchasing. Refrigerate within **1 hour** if the temperature outside is over 90°F.
- Keep fridge at **40°F or below**, freezer at **0°F or below**.
- Thaw food in the fridge, under cold water, or microwave. **Never defrost your food on the countertop or at room temperature**, the outside warms up into the temperature danger zone while the inside may still be frozen.
- Divide larger amounts of leftovers in shallow containers for quicker cooling in the microwave.
- Always marinate food in the refrigerator.
- Store leftovers in shallow containers to cool quickly.

[Food Safety Quick Tips: Food Storage & Freezing Tips](#)



FOOD SAFETY - BY EVENT, SEASON & EMERGENCIES



Food safety can change depending on the season and what is happening around you. Warm weather can cause bacteria to grow faster if food is not kept at the right temperature. Cold weather and indoor events can lead to food being stored the wrong way or leftover food not being handled safely. During emergencies, like power outages or bad storms, food safety becomes even more important because there may be little or no refrigeration or clean water. Paying attention to these risks helps keep food safe at all events and protects everyone's health all year long.

Eat Safe Food after a Power Outage. **Before** a power outage, prepare for emergencies or natural disasters:

- Have a cooler handy
- Freeze containers of water and gel packs
- Buy dry ice or block ice

Click below for more Food safety information:

- [Food safety during emergencies](#)
- [Food safety by event and season](#)
- [Food safety by food type](#)
- [Food safety before, during, and after emergencies](#)
- [Safer food choices](#)

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www.cdc.gov/foodsafety

FOOD SAFETY AT AN OUTDOOR BBQ

- KEEP HANDS CLEAN
- SEPARATE RAW AND COOKED FOODS
- COOK TO THE RIGHT TEMPERATURE
- REFRIGERATE PERISHABLES PROMPTLY

Food Safety reminders for outdoor BBQ's:

- Keep hands clean
- Separate raw and cooked foods
- Cook to the right temperature
- Refrigerate food promptly

