



## How to Insert

• **For burgers, steaks, chops and chicken pieces:** near end of cooking, remove from heat and insert instant-read thermometer stem or fork thermometer tines sideways into the centre of patties or centre of thickest part of food. Insert to a depth of at least 1 1/2" (4 cm).

• **Whole chicken:** near end of cooking, remove from heat and insert instant-read thermometer stem starting at the thickest end of the breast, near the wing, so that the stem points in the direction of the drumsticks (parallel to and 1 1/2" (4 cm) from breast bone). If stuffed, check stuffing temperature by inserting thermometer stem into centre of stuffing.

• **Meatloaves, roasts, casseroles and egg dishes:** near end of cooking, remove from heat and insert instant-read thermometer stem or fork thermometer tines into the centre of the thickest part of meat/casserole, to a depth of at least 1 1/2" (4 cm) OR for meatloaves/roasts, use oven-proof thermometer: prior to cooking, insert thermometer stem into the centre of the thickest part of the meat, avoiding bottom of pan.

• **Whole turkey:** prior to cooking, insert stem of oven-proof thermometer (stem will need to be at least 4 1/2" (11 cm) long) into the thickest part of the inner thigh meat, not touching thigh bone AND/OR near end of cooking, remove from heat and insert instant-read thermometer stem or fork thermometer tines into inner thigh meat (as above). If stuffed, check stuffing temperature by inserting thermometer stem into centre of stuffing.

**Always wash the tongs, plate and thermometer stem used in checking partially cooked meats/poultry before using again.**

Food safety is a key concern to us - this brochure is brought to you by:



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Questions about food safety? Call the Food Safety Info Line toll free (NWT, BC, AB, SK, MB) 1-800-892-8333, or direct (ON, QC, Atlantic) 1-403-287-0098

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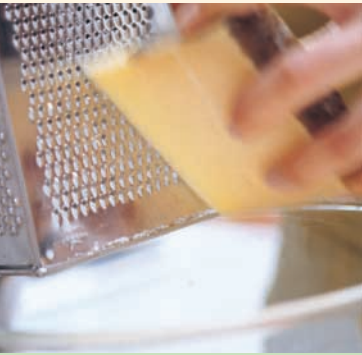
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# Food Safety at Home - You're in Control

*Your guide to safe  
handling and  
preparation of  
foods at home*

# Home food safety - the information you're hungry for...



Mishandling food in the home is a leading cause of foodborne illness.

Food poisoning, a type of foodborne illness, results from eating foods that contain enough harmful microorganisms or their toxins to cause illness. Although often mistaken as a viral illness, like the 24-hour flu, Health Canada estimates that there are 2 million cases of foodborne illness in Canada each year.

## The Facts...

- For those at high risk - infants and young children, pregnant women, older adults and people with weakened immune systems - foodborne illness can result in very serious health problems, such as kidney failure.
- All foods, including fruits and vegetables, have the potential to cause illness since microorganisms can exist on all surfaces.
- Two out of three households in North America put themselves at risk for foodborne illness by not practising basic food safety steps at home.

## You're in control...

There are **4 EASY steps** you can take at home to eliminate harmful bacteria and greatly reduce the risk of foodborne illness for your family. **You can *Fight BAC!***

1. **Clean** - wash hands and surfaces often
2. **Chill** - refrigerate or freeze foods promptly
3. **Separate** - keep raw meat/poultry/seafood and their juices separate from one another and other foods
4. **Cook** - cook to proper temperatures

Studies estimate that about eighty-five percent of all cases of foodborne illness could be prevented if food is handled properly.

There are 4 simple safe food-handling steps you can take at home.



## **Clean:** Wash hands and surfaces often.

Proper hand washing may eliminate nearly half of all cases of foodborne illness.

Thoroughly wash hands using warm, soapy water.



- **Wash your hands** before you begin cooking and after you touch pets, change a diaper, cough or sneeze, use the phone, sort dirty laundry, use the restroom, take out the garbage or handle dirty dishes.
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds — that's two choruses of "Happy Birthday". Keep a scrub brush handy to get under your fingernails. Use a clean cloth or paper towels to dry.
- **Always wash hands, utensils, cutting boards and surfaces when switching tasks, such as handling raw meat/poultry/seafood and preparing vegetables.**
- Mix 1 tsp (5 mL) bleach with 3 cups (750 mL) water to sanitize drains, cutting boards, taps, sinks, counter tops, sponges, pot scrubbers and fridge door handles.

- Wash sponges with hot soapy water after every use. Change sponges, dishcloths, aprons and towels **often** - machine wash in hot water. Replace sponges every few weeks.
- **Wash all fruits and vegetables, including those that you peel or cut, like melons, oranges or cucumbers.**
- Washing eggs is not recommended as this will remove their natural protective coating.
- Washing raw meat/poultry/seafood before cooking is not recommended as this can spread bacteria to kitchen surfaces and other foods.



Frequently sanitize your kitchen using a chlorine bleach solution.

# Chill: Refrigerate/freeze foods promptly.

Cold temperatures can prevent most harmful bacteria from growing.



Refrigerate  
perishables at less  
than 40°F/4°C.

- **Use the 2 Hour Rule in your home and while shopping – refrigerate or freeze all perishables within 2 hours of purchase or preparation.** If the weather is hot, (> 80°F/26°C), reduce that time to 1 hour and use a cooler for perishables.

- Set your fridge temperature to be less than 40°F/4°C and just slightly above the point where your lettuce will freeze. Check the temperature with a refrigerator thermometer. Avoid packing your fridge - cold air must be able to circulate.

- Store eggs in the main body of the fridge, not the door. This keeps eggs at a cooler, more consistent temperature. When buying and storing eggs, check the "best before" date on carton for assurance of Grade A quality.

- **Marinate foods in the fridge.** (If using a 30 minute "quick-marinade" product, follow package instructions).

- **Never defrost foods at room temperature.**

- Meat/poultry/seafood defrosted in the microwave should be cooked immediately.

- **Cook thawed meat/poultry/seafood before refreezing.**

If ice crystals are still present, it can be refrozen.

- **Divide leftovers into small portions to get foods cold faster.**

Refrigerate leftovers promptly and cover when cooled. Don't keep leftovers longer than 2-3 days.

- Remove cooked poultry from bones of whole birds before storing in fridge or freezer.

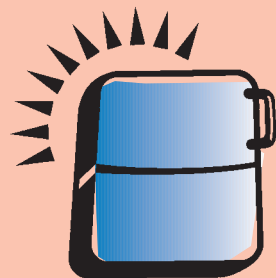
## Refrigerator Storage Chart

(from "packaged on" date or purchase date from butcher)

	# of Days
Ground meats/poultry, fresh seafood	1
Variety meats (e.g. liver, kidney, heart)	1-2
Stew meat, ribs, stir-fry strips, kabobs	2
Whole chicken/turkey or pieces	2-3
Steaks, roasts, chops	3
Cooked meats/poultry, cold cuts (open pkg)	3-4
Vacuum packed roasts/steaks (unopened)	See "best before" date
Fresh shell eggs	See "best before" date

**You can't tell if food is safe by smelling or looking at it.  
IF IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT.**

Refrigerator  
defrosting is the  
safest way to  
thaw.



## Separate: Don't cross-contaminate.

Keep raw meat/poultry/seafood and their juices separate from one another and other foods during storage and preparation.



Keep foods covered.

- When shopping, keep packages of meat/poultry/seafood in bags separate from other groceries.
- **Prevent meat/poultry/seafood juices from dripping onto other foods in the fridge** - place on a plate and store on the bottom shelf.
- Place washed produce in clean containers, not back into their original unwashed packaging.
- Store eggs in their original carton to prevent them from absorbing odours and flavours from other foods.
- Wash scissors or blades used to cut open food packages.
- **Ideally use two cutting boards: one for raw meat/poultry/seafood; the other for cooked foods and washed fruits/vegetables.**

- **Clean and sanitize cutting boards** in the dishwasher or use hot soapy water followed by a mild bleach solution (1 tsp/5 mL bleach: 3 cups/750 mL water). Store your bleach solution in a labelled spray bottle.
- **When checking cooked foods for seasoning, don't "double dip"** - once you've done your tasting, don't put the tasting spoon back into the pot.
- When basting, brush sauce on cooked surfaces only. Be careful not to add sauce with a brush previously used on raw meat/poultry/seafood.
- **Any leftover sauce used for marinating must be boiled 5-7 minutes before basting or dipping. Do not save or reuse marinades.**
- Remove stuffing from poultry immediately after roasting or cook stuffing separately.

Use one plate or platter for raw meat/poultry/seafood and another for cooked.





# Cook: Cook meat, poultry and eggs to proper temperatures.

- **Use a food thermometer or temperature indicator. This is the ONLY way to tell if your food has reached a high enough internal temperature to destroy harmful bacteria.**

- **To know when burgers are done, check patty temperatures with a proper thermometer.** Research shows that the colour of cooked ground beef can vary - beef burger patties may be brown in the centre before being cooked to a safe temperature.

- Enjoy steaks and roasts at rare to medium doneness. Bacteria usually exist on the surface of these whole muscle cuts and are eliminated once the outside of the meat is well cooked. Note: Rolled steaks/roasts should be cooked to medium doneness.

- Don't bring meat/poultry/seafood to room temperature before cooking.

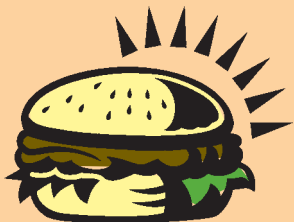
- Finish cooking partially cooked meat/poultry/seafood immediately - do not hold to finish cooking at a later time.

- Serve cooked eggs or egg-rich foods (like rice pudding) immediately after cooking or refrigerate promptly and serve within 3-4 days.

- Stuff poultry just before cooking, stuffing loosely - no more than 2/3 full.

- **Use the Temperature Rules chart on next page, for safe doneness temperatures regardless of thermometer manufacturer's guidelines.**

Don't rely on the 'colour test' to know when meats (especially burgers and meatloaves) are done.



## Temperature Rules for Safe Doneness

(Canadian Industry Standards)

Ground beef/pork	160°F (71°C)
Ground chicken/turkey	175°F (80°C)
Beef, lamb and veal roast & steaks	140°F (60°C) Rare 160°F (71°C) Medium 170°F (77°C) Well
Pork chops/roasts/fresh cured ham	160°F (71°C) Medium
Ham, ready-to-eat, fully cooked	Cold or 140°F (60°C)
Whole turkey (stuffed) or chicken (stuffed or not)	180°F (82°C)
Whole turkey (without stuffing)	170°F (77°C)
Stuffing	165°F (74°C)
Chicken/turkey pieces	170°F (77°C)
Rolled stuffed beef roasts or steaks (e.g. London Broil)	160°F (71°C)
*Mechanically tenderized/delicated meats	160°F (71°C)
Egg dishes, casseroles	160°F (71°C)
Leftovers, reheated	165°F (74°C)

\* Check with your meat counter staff or butcher to inquire about the mechanically tenderized/delicated meats (e.g. Minute Steak) in their store.

Clip and post chart



The heat from cooking can kill bacteria.

# Be a **GREAT** cook. Be a **SAFE** cook. Use a **food thermometer**.



## Take the guesswork out of cooking –

Cook foods to **perfection**, so they are **tasty and juicy** - not overdone. A food thermometer is an essential tool for a great cook.

## Keep your family safe –

Cook to **safe** internal temperatures. Be especially careful if you're cooking for those at high risk of serious illness from foodborne bacteria - infants/young children, pregnant women, older adults or those with chronic illness. Using a food thermometer or temperature indicator is the **ONLY** reliable way to test for safe internal temperatures.

## An investment in safety –

**Buy a good quality, digital instant-read thermometer or thermometer fork, that gives a temperature reading, not just a doneness range.** This thermometer type can be used in all foods and if used when preparing just one of your daily meals, it will cost you less than 3 cents per day (based on a 3 year lifespan for a \$35 thermometer).

## Thermometer Know-How

### Rules of Thumb:

1. Take temperatures of thin foods like burgers within 1 minute of removal from heat, larger cuts like roasts, after 5 to 10 minutes.
2. Insert thermometer stem/indicator into the thickest part of the food, away from bone, fat or gristle.
3. Leave thermometer in food for at least 30 seconds before reading temperature.
4. When food has an irregular shape, like some beef roasts, check the temperature in several places.
- 5. Always wash the thermometer stem thoroughly in hot, soapy water after each use!**
6. Review manufacturers' guidelines specific to the use of your thermometer or temperature indicator.

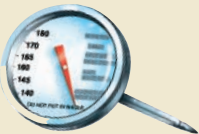
A food thermometer  
is an essential tool  
for a great cook.



# Thermometers & Temperature Indicators

Some thermometers stay in foods while they cook; others do not. Some are ideal for checking thin foods like burgers or chicken breasts; others are good just for roasts.

**We’ve test driven** most of the varieties out there (in a price range under \$40) and have pulled together what you need to know to **choose** and **use** the type that’s best for you!



Oven-Proof Thermometers



Digital Instant/ Rapid-Read Thermometers



Dial Instant/ Rapid-Read Thermometers



Fork Thermometers/ Indicators

Use:

- Roasts, whole turkey, casseroles and meat-loaves. For use in turkey, choose those with stems measuring at least 4 1/2" (11 cm) long.
- Do not use for thin foods like burgers, steaks, chops or chicken pieces.

- Good for all foods.
- Works well for both large cuts and thin pieces of meat/poultry.

- Roasts
- Not recommended for burgers, meatloaves, casseroles, steaks, chops or chicken pieces.

- **Fork Thermometers:** (showing temperature readings) are good for all foods.
- **Fork Indicators:** (showing doneness ranges) are best for large cuts of meat/poultry. **Fork Thermometers** are better for burgers than **Fork Indicators**.

How to Use:

- Oven-proof. Insert before roasting and leave in for the entire cooking time to monitor temperature as food cooks. Can be inserted near end of cooking but allow 1 - 2 minutes for reading to register.
- No batteries needed.

- Not oven-proof. Near the end of cooking, insert at least 1 1/2" (4 cm) of thermometer stem into food, take reading, then remove.
- Needs batteries.

- Not oven-proof. Near the end of cooking, insert at least 1 1/2" (4 cm) of thermometer stem into food, take reading, then remove.
- No batteries needed

- Not oven-proof. Near end of cooking, insert at least 1 1/2" (4 cm) of fork tines into food, take reading, then remove.
- Needs batteries.

How to Read:

- Easy-to-read dial display.
- Temperatures estimated within 2°F (1°C).
- Dial has a handy doneness chart for meats and poultry. (Check that chart matches with the Temperature Rules chart in this booklet)

- Easy-to-read digital display.
- Temperatures estimated within 0.1°F/C.

- Hard-to-read dial display .
- Temperatures estimated within 2°F (1°C).
- Temperature reading is averaged along stem.
- Studies have suggested inaccuracies. Can give false readings due to corrosion within stem.

- **Fork Thermometers**
- Easy-to-read digital display of temperature reading.
- Temperatures estimated within 0.1°F/C.
- **Fork Indicators**
- Flashing light display indicates doneness range (rare,medium,etc.). Check that manufacturers’ definition of doneness matches Safe Doneness Temperatures (see Temperature Rules chart in this booklet).





## Colour-Changing Temperature Indicators

- Best for thin foods like burgers, chops, steaks and chicken breasts – using Temperature Indicator that is specific for each food.
- Indicators showing specific temperatures are better for burgers than those showing doneness range.

- Not oven-proof. Near end of cooking, insert indicator into food, take reading, remove. (To insert paperboard indicators, it may be necessary to cut a slit into food.)
- No batteries needed.

Colour change at the bottom of the device indicates either a doneness range (**Re-useable Indicators**) or that a specific minimum temperature has been reached (**Disposable Indicators**).

**Re-useable Indicators:** Different colours indicate different doneness. Check that manufacturers' definition of doneness matches Safe Doneness Temperatures (see Temperature Rules chart in this booklet).

**Disposable Indicators:** Indicators are designed for a specific temperature reading: e.g. the Ground Beef Indicator will change colour when inserted into burger cooked to 160°F (71°C) or more. Use a different indicator to test each piece of meat/poultry since once colour has changed, the Indicator cannot be re-used.



## Disposable/Reuseable Pop-Up Indicators

- Roasts, whole chicken/turkey, using an indicator that is specific for each food.

- Oven-proof. Insert before roasting, reaching into centre of meat if possible and leave in as food cooks.
- Check temperatures in other parts of the food with an instant-read thermometer. Carefully remove indicator from food to prevent breakage.
- No batteries needed.

- Sensor either pops out of or slips into an outside sheath to indicate doneness or doneness range (rare, medium, etc.). Check that manufacturers' definition of doneness matches Safe Doneness Temperatures (see Temperature Rules chart in this booklet).
- Tests have suggested inaccuracies.