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Safe Kitchen Rules

Georgia C. Lauritzen Ph. D.
Utah State University

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SAFE KITCHEN RULES

Bacteria which cause food poisoning can be controlled by keeping food hot

- 165° - 212°F temperatures kill most bacteria
- 140° - 165°F holding temperatures prevent bacteria growth
- Two hours maximum holding time
- Cook meat and poultry thoroughly – at least to medium (140°F)
- Don't interrupt cooking – cook thoroughly
- Frozen food should be cooked about 1-1/2 times the normal cooking time
- Thoroughly reheat leftovers

Cold temperatures prevent bacterial growth

- Refrigeration temperatures should be 40°F or lower
- Freezing temperatures should be 0°F or lower
- When shopping, pick up perishables last, take directly home, and refrigerate immediately
- Handle meat and poultry as little as possible – leave in store wrap
- Check canned meat products – some require refrigeration

- Fresh poultry, hamburger and variety meat should be kept no more than 1-2 days; other meats for 3-5 days
- Frozen meats should be well wrapped to prevent drying out, and stored no more than 6-12 months
- The safest thawing technique is in the refrigerator
- For faster thawing place food in plastic bag and put in cold water
- Thawing in the microwave is rapid enough to control bacterial growth
- Never leave food at room temperature more than two hours, including preparation, cooking and serving time
- Place all leftovers immediately in refrigerator
- Place large amounts of food in shallow containers to refrigerate

**Select only safe food**
- Frozen foods should be solid
- Refrigerated food should feel cool
- Check dates on products
- The "sell by" date is the date product is to be taken off the shelf
- The "use by" date is the maximum date which will still be top eating quality

**Keep food clean**
- Store food in appropriate place, refrigerator, freezer or clean, dry place
- Keep pets away from food
- Store household cleaners away from food
- Control household pests (rats, mice, roaches)
- Always wash hands before beginning food preparation
- Teach children to wash hands
- Avoid contact with food if you have a cut or infection on your hand
- Do not cough or sneeze on food
- Keep dish cloths and towels clean
- Use hot soapy water to wash hands, counter tops and utensils
- Do not put cooked food on dishes, board or counter tops where raw food has been

**Safe microwave cooking**
- Allow standing time (10-15 minutes) for even heating of food
- Use meat thermometer to check for doneness
- Covers, lids and cooking bags give more even cooking temperatures
- Never use microwave for home canning

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