Safe Kitchen Rules

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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