



## FOOD SAFETY BASICS

In every step of food preparation, follow the four guidelines to keep food safe.

# TIPS AND TRICKS

## Food Safety Basics

### Clean

- Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water before and after handling food, after handling raw meat, poultry, and seafood, touching pets, or touching your hair, face or body.
- Wash cutting boards, knives, utensils and counters with hot soapy water
- Rinse all fruits and vegetables under running water; use a vegetable brush on firm fruits and vegetables.
- Immediately wipe up spills with soap and water
- Wash dish cloths and kitchen towels often and in hot, soapy water and dry on high heat.

### Cook

- Always use a meat thermometer! Color and texture are not reliable indicators of food reaching proper cooking temperatures.
- Cook ground meat to 155°F, poultry to 165°F, roasts and fish to 145°F.
- Be sure to follow cooking instructions on prepared foods.
  - If cooking raw animal foods in the microwave, cook to 165°F.

### Keep Food in the Safe Zone

- Keep hot foods hot (> 135°F) and cold foods cold (< 41°F)
- During gatherings, store perishable foods on ice and keep warm foods on a hot plate or in a slow cooker.
- Refrigerate or freeze foods within 2 hours. Discard any food that has been out longer than 2 hours. Also discard any cold food that has warmed to 70°F or above or any hot food that has cooled to 125°F or below, regardless of how long it has been out.

### Managing Left Overs

#### Cooling

- When putting leftovers in the fridge, the goal is to cool the food to the temperature safe zone quickly to avoid the food becoming unsafe to consume. Some larger items may need to be broken into smaller containers to help speed this process, e.g. a large pot of soup should be cooled in smaller containers or a roasted turkey should be sliced into smaller portions.

#### Defrosting

- Never defrost raw meat/poultry/fish or prepared meals at room temperature. The safest way to defrost is in the refrigerator, ensuring the food stays in the temperature safe zone.
- If you need to thaw quickly, submerge the food in cool running water.
- You can also defrost in the microwave if the food will be cooked immediately after thawing.
- Only defrost the raw meat product that you plan to prepare.

#### Reheating

- When reheating leftover foods in the microwave, rotate or stir halfway through the cooking process so heat reaches the food more evenly.