

Food Safety

Purpose To learn about safe food handling

Intended Audience All employees

- Suggested Activities**
- Place table tents on tables in kitchens, break rooms, worksite cafeterias, boardrooms, photocopier rooms, and other key areas.
 - Hand out and/or post fact sheets by elevators, on bulletin boards, in stairwells, and in other key areas.
 - Arrange educational sessions on topic to be led by a dietitian or food safety expert.
 - Provide information on safe food handling on the intranet and/or in newsletters.

Materials

- Diversity Checklist
- Table tents
(See the attached CD and inserts at the back of this binder:)
- Fact sheets: *Safe Food Handling: The Core Four Practices*
(Fightbac: Partnership for Food Safety Education) (See p. 105-114)
- Web links: *Food Handling Information* (Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture, Food Protection and Enforcement Division)
(See p. 115)
- Fact sheet: *The Temperature Danger Zone*
(Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture) (See p. 117-120)
- Fact sheet: *Food Thermometers for Safe Cooking*
(Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture) (See p. 121)
- How to Access a Dietitian in Nova Scotia
(See Additional Resources, p. 244)
- Intranet/newsletter messages
(See Communication Materials, p. 205)
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Action Plan Worksheet*
(See Additional Resources, p. 221)
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Participant Evaluation Form*
(See Additional Resources, p. 225)

Safe Food Handling

The Core Four Practices

Right now, there may be an invisible enemy ready to strike. He's called BAC (bacteria) and he can make people sick. In fact, even though consumers can't see BAC - or smell him, or feel him - he and millions more like him may already be invading food products, kitchen surfaces, knives and other utensils.

But consumers have the power to Fight BAC!® and to keep food safe from harmful bacteria. It's as easy as following these four simple steps:

- CLEAN: Wash hands and surfaces often
- SEPARATE: Don't cross-contaminate!
- COOK: Cook to proper temperature
- CHILL: Refrigerate promptly

fightbac.org: Partnership for Food Safety Education (PFSE) - Safe Food

http://www.fightbac.org/index2.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=6&pop=1&page=0&Itemid=... 2007-11-27



Fight BAC!®

DID YOU KNOW?

It is important to consistently wash hands and kitchen surfaces before and after preparing food. 67 percent of Americans report they “always” wash cutting boards, utensils, and countertops after preparing each food.

– 2004 Consumer Survey, Partnership for Food Safety Education

Wash hands and surfaces often.

You can't see, taste or smell them. They're sneaky little critters, and they can spread throughout the kitchen and get onto cutting boards, utensils, countertops, and food. They're foodborne bacteria—and if eaten, they can cause foodborne illness. So on your mark, get set, go . . . CLEAN!

THE BIG 3: To Fight BAC!® always...

1

Rub-a-Dub

Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food and after using the bathroom, changing diapers and handling pets. For best results, use warm water to moisten hands, then apply soap and rub hands together for 20 seconds before rinsing thoroughly.

2

Keep your Scene Clean

Wash your cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and countertops with hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before going on to the next food.

3

Towel Toss

Consider using paper towels to clean up kitchen surfaces. When done, throw away the towel. If you use cloth towels, wash them often in the hot cycle of your washing machine.



Wash!

Always wash hands with warm water and soap:

- before handling food;
- after handling food;
- after using the bathroom;
- after changing a diaper;
- after tending to a sick person;
- after blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing; and
- after handling pets.

Surface Cleaning Tips

Using a mixture of one teaspoon liquid chlorine bleach per quart of water can provide some added protection against bacteria on surfaces. Flood the surface with the bleach solution and allow it to stand for several minutes, then rinse and air dry or pat dry with fresh paper towels. Never use bleach or detergent to clean food. Bleach and other cleaners are not intended for consumption.

Fruit & Veggie Handling



PREP THE KITCHEN

Before preparing fruits and vegetables, wash your hands with warm water and soap and use hot soapy water to clean your cutting board, countertop and utensils.

USE WATER – Thoroughly rinse fresh produce under running tap water, including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten. Never use detergent or bleach to wash fresh fruits or vegetables. These products are not intended for consumption.

SCRUB THOROUGHLY – Rub firm-skin fruits and vegetables under running tap water or scrub with a clean vegetable brush while rinsing with running tap water.

CUT FOR CAUTION – Remove and throw away damaged or bruised areas on produce. Bacteria can thrive in these places.

TIPS

- When cooking, wash your food thermometer after each use.
- Wash lunch boxes or totes every night.
- Once a week, throw out perishable foods that should no longer be eaten.
- Wash refrigerator surfaces with hot soapy water.

BAC! Attack

How long should you wash your hands to send bacteria down the drain?

- a. 5 seconds b. 10 seconds c. 15 seconds d. 20 seconds

Answer: d – 20 seconds



- If you have questions or concerns about food safety, contact:
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854). TTY 1-800-256-7072.
- The Fight BAC!® Web site at www.fightbac.org.
- Gateway to Government Food Safety Information at www.foodsafety.gov.

The Partnership for Food Safety, a non-profit organization, is creator and steward of the Fight BAC!® food safety education program developed using scientifically based recommendations resulting from an extensive consumer research process.

PARTNERSHIP FOR FOOD SAFETY EDUCATION • 655 15TH ST, NW, SUITE 700 • WASHINGTON, DC 20005



Keep it Clean!
Watch those Juices!
Remember to spread
the word—not the
bacteria!



Combat Cross-Contamination Get it straight—it's safe to separate!

Cross-contamination is how bacteria can be spread. Improper handling of raw meat, poultry and seafood can create an inviting environment for cross-contamination. As a result, harmful bacteria can spread to food and throughout the kitchen.

Separate. . .Don't Cross-Contaminate

KEEP IT CLEAN!

Lather Up

Always wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food and after using the bathroom, changing diapers and handling pets. Always start with a clean scene—wash cutting boards, dishes, countertops, and utensils with hot soapy water.

Take Two

Use one cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry and seafood.

Clean Your Plate

Never place cooked food back on a plate that previously held raw meat, poultry, seafood, or eggs.

WATCH THOSE JUICES!

Safely Separate

Separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods in your grocery shopping cart and shopping bags, and in your refrigerator.

Seal It

To prevent juices from raw meat, poultry or seafood from dripping onto other foods in the refrigerator, place these raw foods in sealed containers or plastic bags on the bottom shelf of the fridge.

Marinating Mandate

Sauce that is used to marinate raw meat, poultry or seafood should not be used on cooked food unless it is boiled first.



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DID YOU KNOW?
 One out of every four hamburgers turns brown before it has been cooked to a safe internal temperature.
 – USDA FSIS



Cook to Safe Temperature

Cooking food safely is a matter of degrees! Foods are properly cooked when they reach a high enough internal temperature to kill the harmful bacteria that cause foodborne illness. How does your safe cooking know-how measure up?



DID YOU KNOW?
 Thermy™ says, "It's safe to bite when the temperature is right!"

Cook It Right...

Food is safely cooked when it reaches a high enough internal temperature to kill the harmful bacteria that cause illness as measured with a food thermometer. Refer to the Safe Cooking Temperatures on the next page.

...And Keep It Hot

When serving up hot food buffet-style, remember...

On a buffet table, hot food should be kept at 140° F or higher. Keep food hot with chafing dishes, slow cookers and warming trays.

When bringing hot soup, chili or crab dip to an outdoor party...

Keep it all piping hot before and during serving. Transport hot foods in insulated thermal containers. Keep containers closed until serving time.



DID YOU KNOW?

Half of Americans surveyed say they use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of meat and poultry when cooking.
 – 2004 Partnership for Food Safety Education



Sizzling Cooking Tips

Is It Done Yet?

Use a clean food thermometer to measure the internal temperature of food to make sure meat, poultry, egg dishes, casseroles, and other types of food are cooked all the way through.

Microwave Musts

When cooking in a microwave oven, make sure there are no cold spots in food because bacteria can survive there. For best results, cover food, stir and rotate for even cooking. If there is no turntable, rotate the dish by hand once or twice during cooking. Observe stand times.

Boil and Bubble

Bring sauces, soups and gravies to a boil when reheating.

“EATING OUT” TIP OF THE DAY

Choose menu items that are thoroughly cooked. If it appears that any food, such as beef, pork, chicken, fish, or eggs, has not been thoroughly cooked, return the food for additional cooking.



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SAFE COOKING TEMPERATURES

Internal temperature as measured with a food thermometer

Ground Meat & Meat Mixtures

Beef, Pork, Veal, Lamb	160°F
Turkey, Chicken	165°F

Fresh Beef, Veal, Lamb

Medium Rare	145°F
Medium	160°F
Well Done	170°F

Poultry

Whole poultry and poultry parts	165°F
Stuffing (cooked alone or in bird)	165 F

Fresh Pork

Medium	160°F
Well Done	170°F

Ham

Fresh (raw)	160°F
Pre-cooked (to reheat)	140°F

Eggs & Egg Dishes

Eggs	Cook until yolk & white are firm
Egg dishes	160°F

Seafood

Fin Fish	145°F	or flesh is opaque & separates easily with fork
Shrimp, Lobster & Crabs	flesh pearly & opaque	
Clams, Oysters & Mussels	Shells open	during cooking
Scallops	milky white or opaque & firm	

Leftovers & Casseroles	165°F
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DID YOU KNOW?

Among consumers ages 25 to 44, 16 percent report they own a refrigerator thermometer. The best way to make sure your refrigerator is at 40° F is to use a refrigerator thermometer.

– FMI Trends, 2005



BAC Down! Refrigerate Promptly and Properly

According to both the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service, refrigeration at 40° F or below is one of the most effective ways to reduce risk of foodborne illness. Microorganisms grow more rapidly at warmer temperatures, and research shows that keeping a constant refrigerator temperature of 40° F or below helps slow growth of these harmful microbes.



BUY SOME PEACE OF MIND:
Refrigerator thermometers are available at grocery, hardware and discount stores.

The Cool Rules



Use This Tool to Keep It Cool

Use a refrigerator thermometer to be sure the temperature is consistently 40° F or below.

The Chill Factor

Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared foods and leftovers within two hours of purchase or use. Always marinate foods in the refrigerator.

The Thaw Law

Never defrost food at room temperature. Thaw food in the refrigerator. If you will cook food immediately, for a quick thaw, defrost in the microwave or enclose the food in an airtight package and submerge it in cold water.

Divide and Conquer

Separate large amounts of leftovers into shallow containers for quicker cooling in the refrigerator.

Avoid the Pack Attack

Do not overstuff the refrigerator. Cold air must circulate to keep food safe.

Rotate Before It’s Too Late

Use or discard chilled foods as recommended in the USDA Cold Storage Chart found at www.foodsafety.gov/~fsg/f01chart.html.

Don’t Go Too Low

As you approach 32° F, ice crystals can begin to form and lower the quality of foods such as raw fruits, vegetables and eggs. A refrigerator thermometer will help you determine whether you are too close to this temperature.



Always refrigerate or freeze meat, poultry, eggs, and other perishables as soon as you get them home from the store. Never let raw meat, poultry, eggs, cooked food, or cut fresh fruits and vegetables sit at room temperature more than two hours before putting them in the refrigerator or freezer. Reduce that to one hour when the temperature is above 90° F.

Serve & Preserve

When serving cold food at a buffet, picnic or barbecue, keep these “chilling” tips in mind:

- Cold foods should be kept at 40° F or below.
- Keep all perishable foods chilled right up until serving time.
- Place containers of cold food on ice for serving to make sure they stay cold.
- It's particularly important to keep custards, cream pies and cakes with whipped-cream or cream-cheese frostings refrigerated. Don't serve them if refrigeration is not possible.



Hit the Road Cold!

When traveling with food, be aware that time, temperature and a cold source are key.

- Always use ice or cold packs, and fill your cooler with food. A full cooler will maintain its cold temperatures longer than one that is partially filled.
- If you've asked for a doggie bag to take home leftovers from a restaurant, it should be refrigerated within two hours of serving.

The Big Thaw

There are three safe ways to defrost food: in the refrigerator, in cold water, and in the microwave.

DEFROSTING DO'S

- Defrost food in the refrigerator. This is the safest method for all foods.
- Short on time? Thaw meat and poultry in airtight packaging in cold water if it will be used immediately. Change the water every 30 minutes, so the food continues to thaw in cool water.
- Defrost food in the microwave only if you are going to cook it immediately.

DEFROSTING DON'TS

- Never defrost food at room temperature. Food left out at room temperature longer than two hours may enter the Danger Zone—the unsafe temperatures between 40° F and 140° F. Bacteria can multiply rapidly between 40° F and 140° F.
- Don't defrost food in hot water.



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**Food Handling Information
Food Protection and Enforcement Division**

Choosing a Caterer	HTML	PDF
The Temperature Danger Zone (Poster of the Temperature Danger Zone)	HTML	PDF
Food Thermometers for Safe Cooking	HTML	PDF
Shellfish Food Safety	HTML	PDF
Summer Food Safety		
Summer Barbecuing and the Risks of Food Poisoning	HTML	PDF
Safe Food for the Great Outdoors	HTML	PDF
From U-Picks To Your Home — Careful Handling of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables	HTML	PDF
Information on E.coli 0157	HTML	PDF
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Last Update: May 1, 2007

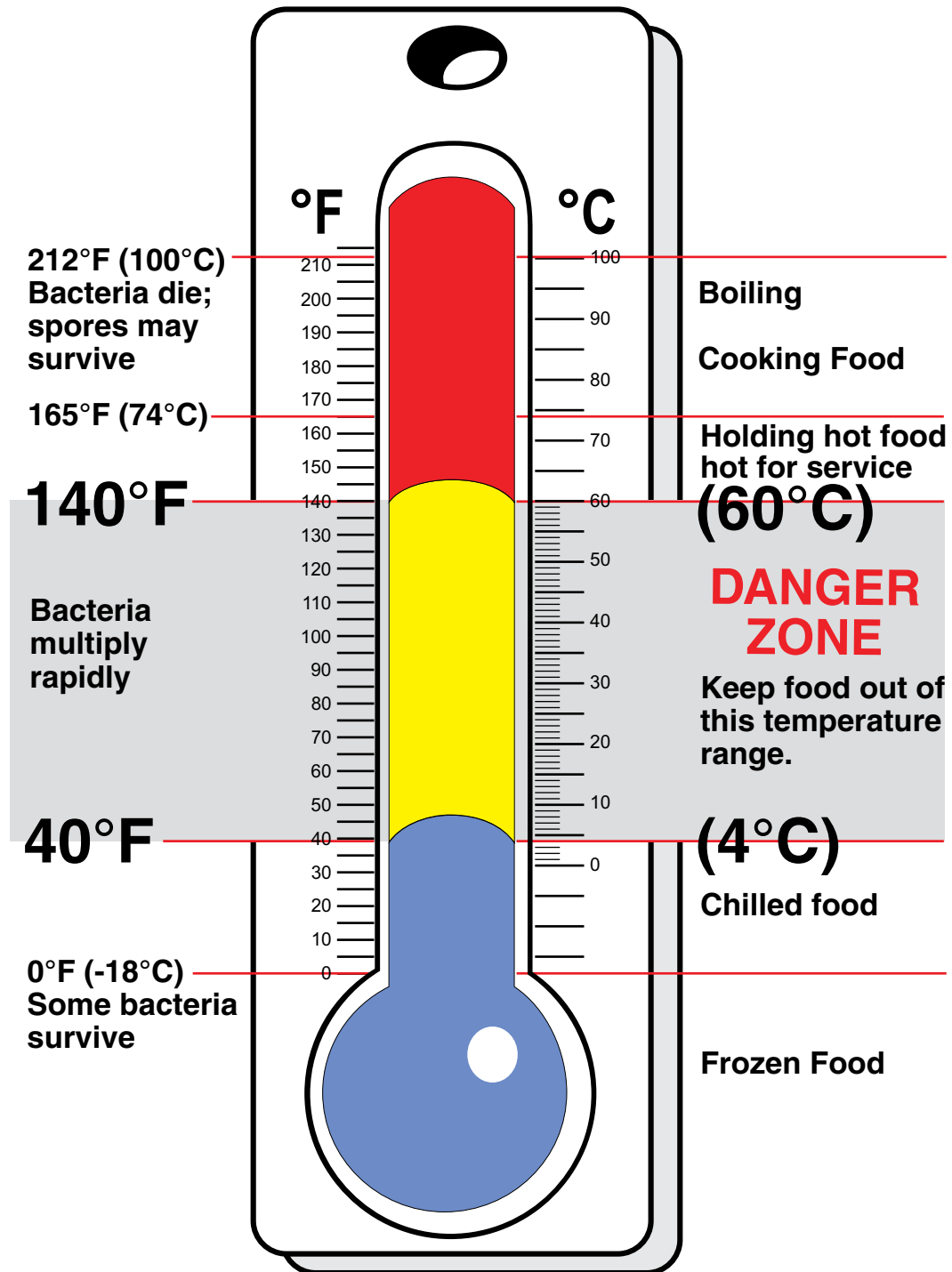
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The Danger Zone



factsheet

The Temperature Danger Zone

The most important factor for safe handling of food and preventing food borne illness is keeping food out of the Danger Zone. Nearly 3/4 of all food-related illnesses are the result of poor temperature control. Following the simple rule “Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold” can prevent many food borne illnesses from occurring.

What is the Temperature Danger Zone?

Bacteria that cause food borne illness multiply quickest between 4°C and 60°C (40°F - 140°F). The Danger Zone is this temperature range in which bacteria and spoilage bacteria grow quickest. Lower temperatures prevent the bacteria from growing to dangerous levels. Temperatures above 60°C will kill the bacteria. Foods that allow the growth of bacteria, causing food-borne illness are called “potentially hazardous foods” and should be kept out of the Danger Zone. These potentially hazardous food are:

- Meat, fish, or poultry, and foods containing these such as casseroles, deli meats, salads and sandwiches and plan ahead dinners.
- Eggs and other protein rich foods like soya bean products and foods containing them such as quiche, soya milk, salads and casseroles.
- Dairy products and foods containing dairy products such as custards, soft cheeses, cream filled baked goods and dairy desserts.
- Fresh cut or peeled fruit or vegetables such as cut melons, fruit salads
- Cooked vegetables, beans, rice and pasta dishes.
- Shellfish (alive or cooked) and seafood or foods containing seafood such as chowders, crab cakes.
- Sauces, gravy, and non commercial garlic in oil mixtures.
- Sprouts such as alfalfa and bean sprouts.

Protecting Foods from the Danger Zone

The best way to protect food from the Danger Zone is to:

- Arrange shopping to get food home quickly and into the refrigerator.
- Keep food cold by storing in a refrigerator at 4°C (40°F) or below. Don't overload the refrigerator. If necessary remove foods such as soft drinks or pickles to make room for potentially hazardous foods.
- Keep food hot by maintaining it at 60°C (140°F) or higher using a stove or steam table.
- Thaw foods in the refrigerator or in cold water changing the water every 30 minutes. If using a microwave to thaw raw foods, cook immediately.
- When cooking large meats or volumes of food, do it in one uninterrupted step. Check the internal temperature with a thermometer.
- Foods that are not being used immediately must be cooled quickly. Reducing large volumes of food into smaller portions will help in reducing cooling times. Roasts, hams, or turkeys should be sliced while still hot and put in shallow pans, no more than two inches deep and then placed in the refrigerator to cool. Containers of hot food can be placed in a sink surrounded by ice or cold water for more rapid cooling. Do not fully cover the food until it has cooled to 4°C (40°F).
- Leftovers must be reheated to at least 74°C (165°F).

Is Food Left in the Danger Zone Safe to Eat?

If potentially hazardous foods are left in the danger zone for less than two hours, the food can be safely refrigerated or used immediately. If the time exceeds two hours in the danger zone, bacterial growth would be greater and the food could be unsafe. Therefore follow the two-hour rule and refrigerate, freeze or consume the food within two hours of purchase or preparation.

Measuring Food Temperatures

- Appearance and touch are not reliable indicators of safe temperatures. Taking the temperature of the food using a proper food thermometer is the only sure way of knowing that food is not in the Danger Zone. Check the temperature of food with either a metal stem probe or digital read type thermometer. For more information on using food thermometers see “Food Thermometers for Safe Cooking” at <http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/foodsafety/pdfs/therm.pdf>
- Checking the temperature of a refrigerator, can be done using a stick-on thermometer stuck to the inside wall of the unit or by hanging or placing a thermometer on a shelf. Thermometers should be located near the door which is the warmest area of the refrigerator.

Recommended Internal Cooking Temperatures

Pork, Veal, Lamb – 71°C (160°F)
 Ground Meat – 71°C (160°F)
 Whole chicken/turkey – 82°C (180°F)
 Chicken/turkey Stuffing (*inside temp.*) – 74°C (165°F)
 Chicken/turkey pieces – 77°C (170°F)
 Ground Poultry – 74°C (165°F)
 Beef steaks/roasts – 63°C (145°F) for medium rare, 71°C (160°F) for medium, or 77°C (170°F) for well done.

FightBac©

There are four simple rules for food safety that will help ensure an enjoyable celebration:

CLEAN	wash hands, utensils and surfaces often to keep everything clean and free of bacteria
SEPARATE	keep foods separate to avoid cross contamination
COOK	cook to proper temperatures
CHILL	refrigerate foods promptly

For further information on food safety visit the
 Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture
 Food Safety website at
<http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/foodsafety/>

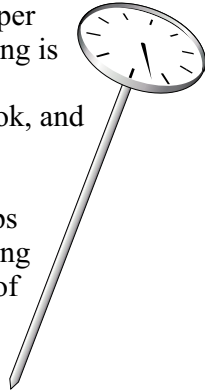


factsheet

Food Thermometers for Safe Cooking

Ensuring that foods reach the proper internal temperature during cooking is one of the four basic food safety messages — Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill.

By following these important steps when preparing, storing and serving foods, people can lessen the risk of having their food become contaminated allowing harmful bacteria to multiply and cause food-borne illness.



When cooking, visual indicators, like colour change, are not a reliable means of ensuring that food is thoroughly cooked and safe. The only reliable method of knowing that foods are adequately cooked is the use of food thermometers.

Thermometers will:

- indicate if food has reached proper internal temperature to destroy harmful bacteria
- prevent over-cooking
- be helpful when cooling and reheating foods

To protect yourself and your family from food borne illness, food thermometers should be in every kitchen and used every time.

TYPES OF THERMOMETERS

There are several types of food thermometers available and they vary in technology and price. Thermometers satisfactory for food safety include: thermocouple; digital instant-read thermistors; two types of bimetal dial thermometers — the oven-safe and instant-read thermometers; thermometer forks; and pop-up thermometers.

Digital instant-read thermistors have a sensing device in the tip and can measure both thick and thin foods. The tip is placed in the center of the thickest part of the food. This thermometer is not designed to remain in the food but measure the temperature near the end of the estimated cooking time. The thermometer responds quickly (about 10 seconds) on a digital display.

Bimetal dial thermometers — the oven-safe and instant-read thermometers sense the temperature from the tip and up the stem about 2 – 2½ inches. The resulting temperature is an average of the temperature along the sensing area. They have a dial display.

The **oven-safe thermometer** is designed to remain in the food during cooking, however if not left in the food it may take up to several minutes to register the temperature. It is used with thick foods, not recommended for foods less than three inches thick.

Instant-read dial thermometers measure food temperature in about 20 seconds. To be accurate the probe must be inserted the full length of its sensing area (two to three inches). The thermometer is not designed to remain in the food, but to measure the temperature near the end of the estimated cooking time.

The **pop-up timer** is commonly used in turkeys or roasting chicken. The stem of the device pops up when the tip has reached a certain temperature. While these devices are accurate it is recommended that other parts of the food be checked with a conventional food thermometer.

The **thermocouple** displays food temperatures the quickest and is good for measuring both thick and thin foods. These thermometers are the most expensive and may be difficult to find in most stores.

Thermometer forks combine cooking forks with food thermometers. The temperature-measuring device is located in one of the tines of the fork. Food temperatures are indicated by a digital display or indicator lights on the handle. These are not designed to be left in foods; they are most convenient when grilling.

Food thermometers are available in most grocery stores, kitchen boutiques and from restaurant equipment suppliers.

ACCURACY

Most food thermometers have an accuracy of approximately 1°C (3°F). These temperatures are only correct when the thermometer is positioned properly in the food. If not properly placed, it will not indicate the correct internal temperature of the food.

Thermometers should be placed in the thickest part of the food away from bone, fat or gristle. When food is irregularly shaped such as meat roasts, temperature should be checked in several places. For poultry, measure in the thickest part of the thigh, avoiding contact with the bone. If stuffed, check temperature at the center of the stuffing.

When measuring temperatures of thin foods such as hamburger patties or chicken breasts, a thermistor is suggested. If using a dial thermometer, insert through the side of the food so that all of the sensing area is in the center of the food.

TEMPERATURES

Poultry and meat must be cooked to the following internal temperatures to ensure safety:

Pork, Veal, Lamb	71°C (160°F)
Ground Meat	71°C (160°F)
Whole chicken/turkey	82°C (180°F)
Chicken/turkey Stuffing (inside temp.)	74°C (165°F)
Chicken/turkey pieces	77°C (170°F)
Ground Poultry	74°C (165°F)
Beef steaks/roasts	63°C (145°F) medium rare 71°C (160°F) medium 77°C (170°F) well done

For further information on food safety visit the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture Food Safety website at

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