

# NINE FOOD SAFETY STRATEGIES



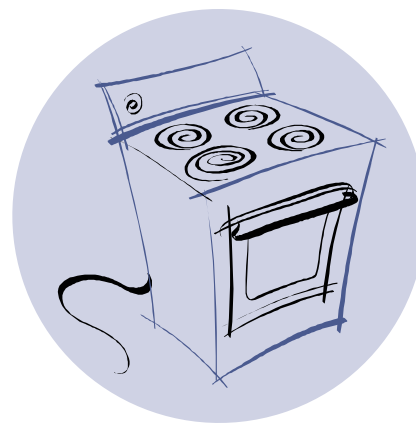
Keeping food safe to eat is as simple as keeping hot foods hot, cold foods cold, and all foods clean. The following pointers will tell you how.

## Keeping Foods Hot

- 1 Cook foods thoroughly, especially meats, poultry and eggs. *Do not partially cook food, stop, then finish later.* Foodborne illness-causing bacteria may grow before the second cooking.
- 2 Discard any cooked or chilled food left out at room temperature longer than two hours (one hour when the temperature is above 90°F).
- 3 Cover leftovers while reheating to retain moisture; and be sure to reheat the food completely (to 165°F).

## Keeping Foods Cold

- 4 Check your refrigerator and freezer periodically. Keep your refrigerator at about 40 degrees or lower and...if in doubt, use an appliance thermometer.
- 5 Thaw meat and poultry in the refrigerator. *Do not thaw them on the kitchen counter at room temperature — foodborne illness bacteria grow very rapidly and may make you and your family sick.* For faster thawing, place frozen packages in a watertight plastic bag under cold running water or change the water every 30 minutes.
- 6 Store leftovers in the refrigerator as soon as possible. *Do not let food cool on the counter.*
- 7 When shopping, pick up perishable foods last. Be sure frozen foods are solid and refrigerated foods are cold. If you live more than 30 minutes from the grocery store or have other errands or stops to make, consider placing foods in an ice chest for the trip home.



## Keeping Foods Cold

- 8 Since bacteria live all around us and even on our bodies, always wash your hands with hot water and soap (20 seconds), followed by drying, before handling food or cooking.
- 9 When working with raw meat or poultry, wash your hands, utensils, and counters with hot, soapy water between steps in your recipe. Bacteria on these foods can contaminate other foods. Use a clean plate for cooked meats and poultry — never use the same one that held the raw food.

For other questions about Food Safety or foodborne illness, contact your county Cooperative Extension office.

## References

Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS), USDA. *Be Smart. Keep Foods Apart. Don't Cross-Contaminate.* October 2006.

## Acknowledgment

This title was originally written by Ralph Meer and Scottie Misner.



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This information has been reviewed by university faculty.  
[cals.arizona.edu/pubs/health/az9717.pdf](http://cals.arizona.edu/pubs/health/az9717.pdf)

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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, James A. Christenson, Director, Cooperative Extension, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, The University of Arizona.

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