

Food handling safety risks at home are more common than most people think. The four easy lessons of

**CLEAN, SEPARATE,  
COOK, and CHILL**

can help prevent harmful bacteria from making your family sick.

To find out more about food safety, visit **befoodsafe.ca**



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**4  
Easy  
Lessons  
in Safe Food Handling**

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CANADIAN PARTNERSHIP  
FOR CONSUMER FOOD SAFETY EDUCATION  
*Be Food Safe.*

Canadian Partnership for Consumer Food Safety Education is a non-profit organization.

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# 1. Clean.

Bacteria can spread throughout the kitchen and get on hands, cutting boards, knives and countertops. Frequent cleaning can prevent that from happening.



- Wash your hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds before and after handling food.
- Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils and countertops with hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before you go on to the next food.
- Consider using paper towels to clean up kitchen surfaces. If you use cloth towels wash them often in the hot cycle of your washing machine.
- Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under cool running tap water, including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten.
- Rub firm-skin fruits and vegetables under cool running tap water or scrub with a clean vegetable brush while rinsing with running tap water.
- Clean reusable shopping bags often.

# 2. Separate.

Cross-contamination is how harmful bacteria spread. Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood and their juices separate from foods that won't be cooked.



- Use one cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry and seafood.
- Separate raw meat, poultry, and seafood from other foods in your grocery shopping cart, grocery bags and in your refrigerator.
- Never place cooked food on an unwashed plate that previously held raw meat, poultry, seafood or eggs.
- Place packages of meat and poultry in separate plastic bags that are found at the grocery store meat counter.

# 3. Cook.

Even for experienced cooks, the improper heating and preparation of food means bacteria can survive.



- Use a food thermometer to measure the internal temperature of cooked foods. Make sure that meat, poultry, egg dishes, casseroles and other foods and leftovers are cooked to the internal temperatures shown in the chart.
- Cook ground meat or ground poultry until it reaches a safe internal temperature. Colour is not a reliable indicator of doneness.
- Bring sauces, soups and gravy to a boil when reheating.
- Turn thin foods at least twice while cooking.

# 4. Chill.

Bacteria multiply fastest at temperatures between 4°C (40°F) and 60°C (140°F), so chilling food properly is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of illness.



- Chill leftovers and takeout foods within 2 hours. Keep the fridge at 4°C (40°F) or below and use an appliance thermometer to check the temperature.
- Refrigerate or freeze meat, poultry, eggs and other perishables as soon as you get them home from the store.
- Never defrost food at room temperature. Food must be kept at a safe temperature during thawing. There are three safe ways to defrost food: in the refrigerator, in cold water, and in the microwave. Food thawed in the microwave should be cooked immediately.

## SAFE COOKING TEMPERATURES

You can't tell by looking...  
use a food thermometer to be sure!

	Internal temperature
Ground meat and meat mixtures (burgers, sausages, meatballs, meatloaf, beef minute steak and casseroles) <i>Turn burgers twice or more while cooking.</i>	<b>160°F (71°C)</b>
Ground chicken/turkey	<b>165°F (74°C)</b>
Beef, lamb and veal roasts and steaks <i>Turn steaks twice or more while cooking.</i>	<b>145°F (63°C) Med-rare</b> <b>160°F (71°C) Medium</b> <b>170°F (77°C) Well</b>
Pork chops/roasts/fresh cured ham	<b>160°F (71°C) Medium</b>
Fresh (raw) ham	<b>160°F (71°C)</b>
Pre-cooked ham	<b>165°F (74°C)</b>
Whole turkey (stuffed)	<b>180°F (82°C)</b>
Chicken (stuffed or not)	<b>180°F (82°C)</b>
Stuffing (alone or in the bird cavity)	<b>165°F (74°C)</b>
Chicken/turkey pieces	<b>165°F (74°C)</b>
Duck and goose	<b>180°F (82°C)</b>
Egg dishes, casseroles	<b>165°F (74°C)</b>
Raw breaded chicken products <i>Do not microwave.</i>	<b>165°F (74°C)</b>
Leftover, reheated	<b>165°F (74°C)</b>
Fish	<b>158°F (70°C)</b>
Shellfish (shrimp, crab, scallops, clams, oysters and mussels) <i>Discard any clams, oysters or mussels that do not open when cooked.</i>	<b>165°F (74°C)</b>

Cooking temperatures provided by Health Canada