



Food Hero for Older Adults

Focus on Food Safety



Protect yourself and others from food poisoning by following these 4 food safety steps

Clean: Wash hands, utensils and kitchen surfaces often when preparing food.

Separate: Keep raw meat, poultry and seafood away from other foods.

Cook: Cook food to a safe temperature to kill harmful microorganisms.

Chill: Refrigerate leftovers and foods that spoil within 2 hours.

Everyday tips for safe food

Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running water before preparing, unless they are pre-rinsed or cut for ready-to-eat.

Raw chicken should not be rinsed first. Rinsing can spread germs to other foods, the sink and the counter.

Use a food thermometer to check if a food has reached a safe internal temperature.

Label leftovers with the date to be thrown away if not yet eaten. For many items, this is three to four days after they are prepared.

Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator. Place in a container on a low shelf where they won't drip on other foods.

USDA Recommended Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures

Steaks and Roasts 145 degrees F	Fish 145 degrees F	Pork 160 degrees F	Ground Beef 160 degrees F	Egg Dishes 160 degrees F	Chicken Breasts 165 degrees F	Whole Poultry 165 degrees F	Frozen Foods and Leftovers 165 degrees F
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Classics Stay Strong

Many disease-causing bacteria, viruses and parasites cannot be detected by taste. Do not taste food to see if it is safe to eat.

Did you know? "Best if Used By" and "Sell By" dates are guides for best flavor and quality, not food safety.

Older adults, along with very young children, pregnant women and people with a weakened immune system, are more likely to experience serious food poisoning.

Good news! Physical activity can delay the immune function changes of aging. Sit less and move more by doing activities you enjoy, such as walking or dancing.

How long is your food safe in the refrigerator?

Foods that will spoil or become dangerous to eat if not kept in the refrigerator or freezer are called "perishable." Use the guide below to mark foods with the date when they are no longer safe to eat and should be thrown away.

Types of Perishable Foods	Days to Keep in Refrigerator (40 degrees F or below)
Salads	3 to 4 days
Luncheon meat, unopened	2 weeks
Luncheon meat, opened	3 to 5 days
Ground meats and poultry (raw)	1 to 2 days
Beef, pork, lamb and veal (raw)	3 to 5 days
Poultry pieces (raw)	1 to 2 days
Fish (raw)	1 to 3 days
Eggs in shell	3 to 5 weeks
Soups and stews	3 to 4 days
Leftovers	3 to 4 days

For a chart with how long to keep other foods, visit FoodSafety.gov



Some foods are more likely to cause food poisoning

Instead of these

Choose these

Undercooked meat, poultry, seafood or eggs



Cook meat, poultry, seafood and eggs to their safe temperature

Unpasteurized (raw) milk and juices



Drink only pasteurized milk and juices (look at labels)

Deli and luncheon meats and hot dogs that have not been heated to steaming hot



Heat deli and luncheon meats and hot dogs to steaming hot

Fresh vegetables and fruits that have not been rinsed



Rinse fresh vegetables and fruits before preparing or eating

Soft cheeses made from raw milk (look at labels)



Choose only cheeses made from pasteurized milk (look at labels)

Raw sprouts (including mung beans)



Eat only cooked sprouts