

FOOD SAFETY FUNDAMENTALS

Following these 5 rules will help keep our food safe;

1. *Store potentially hazardous foods at the right temperature*

- Bacteria need warmth to grow and some bacteria need to grow to large numbers to make people ill.
- Keeping food at or less than 5°C will cause food poisoning bacteria to grow so slowly that it is rarely a problem.
- Keeping food at or above 60°C will cause the bacteria to start to die off as the temperature rises.
- For these reasons, between 5°C and 60°C is known as the 'Danger Zone'.

What is Potentially Hazardous Food? Some foods better support bacterial growth and need special care. These foods are moist, not acidic and contain enough nutrients for bacteria to grow. Such foods include raw and cooked meat, cooked rice, cooked vegetables, prepared salads and milk.

KEEP POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS FOOD AT OR BELOW 5°C OR AT OR ABOVE 60°C

2. *Cook food thoroughly*

- Ensure the centre of frozen food is fully thawed before cooking
- Cook chicken until the juices run clear.
- Cook mince patties thoroughly so there is no pink.
- Stir foods in microwave ovens during cooking to ensure even heating.
- Use a thermometer to check that food in the centre is at least 75°C after cooking.
- Rapidly reheat food to 70°C for at least (2) minutes.

Cool food quickly

- Do not leave potentially hazardous foods to cool on the bench top or stove overnight.
- Once cooked food has cooled to reasonably warm (about 45°C) it should be put into the fridge.
- To cool food faster divide it into smaller containers/portions and use metal containers.

3. *Don't cross contaminate*

- Avoid transferring harmful bacteria from raw food to prepared food by:
 - Washing hands thoroughly after handling raw meat.
 - Washing and sanitising chopping boards, knives and any other utensils after preparing raw meat or use separate equipment.
 - Storing uncooked food below cooked food in the refrigerator and keeping all food covered.

4. *Clean all equipment*

- All work areas, utensils and equipment, such as slicers and mixers, must be thoroughly cleaned to ensure bacteria don't have the opportunity to survive and contaminate food the next time the equipment is used.
- Equipment that comes into contact with food, such as knives, chopping boards and eating utensils need to also be sanitised using water at greater than 77°C and/or a chemical sanitiser.

5. *Use good hygiene practices*

- Regularly wash and dry your hands using soap and paper towel especially:
 - Before starting food preparation
 - After handling raw food especially raw meat
 - After using the toilet
- Notify your supervisor if you think you might have food poisoning.
- Avoid handling food until 48 hours after symptoms such as diarrhoea or vomiting have ceased.

Should you have any queries or require clarification about any of the above contact your local Environmental Health Officer on the number listed on the front of this sheet.

Source: 'For Goodness Sake Read This! Food Safety Fundamentals' Dept. Human Services (SA)