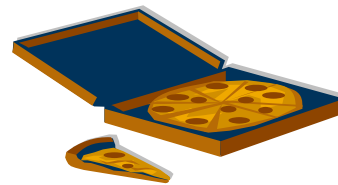


# Food Safety !



It's **August** and this month's topic is food safety. August is a great time to talk about food safety! Just think about everything that goes on during August that involves food – outdoor sporting games, picnics, family reunions, etc. When it is hot outside, foods such as dairy products, meats, seafood, and fresh produce (which are meant to be cold) get warm very quickly giving bacteria a great environment in which to grow. Knowing the correct way to handle foods – such as safe temperatures, safe storage of foods, and cleaning methods – will eliminate the risk of foodborne illness so you can focus on having fun in the warm weather! This website will help you become a food safety expert, sharing tips on food safety for keeping leftovers, for packing your child's lunch, potentially risky foods, tips for eating at work, and a quiz to test your knowledge!

**Don't forget – See below for details on how to enter to win this month's prize!**



## How Long Do Leftovers Last?

Here is what the American Dietetic Association recommends regarding how long to keep leftovers in your refrigerator:

<b><i>Type of Food</i></b>	<b><i>Number of days to keep in refrigerator:</i></b>
<b><i>Pizza</i></b>	<b><i>1-2 days</i></b>
<b><i>Pasta/Rice</i></b>	<b><i>1-2 days</i></b>
<b><i>Casserole</i></b>	<b><i>3-4 days</i></b>
<b><i>Soup</i></b>	<b><i>3-4 days</i></b>
<b><i>Deli meat</i></b>	<b><i>2-3 days</i></b>
<b><i>Cooked chicken</i></b>	<b><i>3-4 days</i></b>
<b><i>Fresh salad/vegetables</i></b>	<b><i>1-2 days</i></b>

\* Visit the Healthy Eating Tip of the Month Bulletin Board in the University Hospital Cafeteria to see a list of more foods!



## How to Pack a Safe Lunch!

Here are a few ways to avoid foodborne illness in your lunchbox:

1. Wash your hands with soap and hot water before preparing your lunch.
2. Wash any surfaces or utensils you will use with sanitizers and hot water.
3. If you make a sandwich the night before, keep it in the refrigerator until the next morning before you leave.
4. Insulated, soft lunchboxes are the best way to keep foods at the right temperature. Always refrigerate your lunch until you're ready to eat it, or try a freezer gel pack.
5. Include a travel-sized container of hand sanitizer in your lunchbox so you can quickly clean your hands before eating.
6. Do not reuse bags that have carried groceries as they may be carrying bacteria which could get onto your food and make you sick.

## Great Lunch Ideas!

### Day 1:

- Almond butter and apple sandwich –  
With 2 slices of whole wheat bread, spread almond butter on 1 side with slivered almonds and thin slices of apple.
- 1 - 4 oz yogurt in any flavor
- 4-5 vanilla wafer cookies
- 1 carton of 2% milk

### Day 2:

- 1 cup of vegetable soup in a thermos
- 1 whole wheat dinner roll
- 1 serving of string cheese
- 1/2 cup of fresh fruit
- 1 carton of 2% milk

### Day 3:

- 2 small slices of leftover pizza made with whole wheat crust, low fat mozzarella, and fresh vegetables
- 1 small orange or banana
- 1 apple juice box



## Potentially Risky Foods –

The following foods have a reputation for causing foodborne illness when not kept at the right temperature or when prepared/cooked incorrectly. If you or someone you know has a lowered immunity and is at risk for a foodborne illness, make sure they see this:

<b>Food Group</b>	<b>Potentially Hazardous Foods</b>
<b>Grains</b>	-Baked or Boiled Potatoes -Cooked rice, potatoes, or other grains.
<b>Vegetables</b>	-Sprouts and sprout seeds -Any heat-treated vegetables
<b>Fruits</b>	-Sliced melons -Any heat-treated fruits
<b>Milk/Dairy</b>	-All milk products
<b>Meat/Seafood/Beans</b>	-Shell eggs -Meats, poultry, fish -Shellfish and edible crustacean (shrimp, lobster) -Tofu or other soy-protein foods -Meat alternatives
<b>Fats</b>	-Garlic-and-oil mixtures

**People who are at an increased risk:** The elderly, children under 2 years old, people with chronic diseases such as cancer/AIDS/kidney disease, those with autoimmune diseases like Lupus or Diabetes, anyone who has had a transplant operation and is taking immunosuppressant medications, people with liver disease and pregnant women.

# Top Tips for Eating at the Office

1. **Refrigerate!** Perishable foods such as sandwiches, fresh fruits and vegetables, leftovers, etc. will spoil if left unrefrigerated for 2 hours or more. Always refrigerate these items. If it is not possible to refrigerate foods, then pack an ice pack (or frozen water bottle) with your lunch to keep food cold for 2-4 hours.
2. **Clean it!** According to an ADA survey, 44 percent of office refrigerators are cleaned only once a month, and 22 percent are cleaned just once or twice a year. Make sure that food items are not kept in the refrigerator too long by writing your name and date on the food item.
3. **Keep the microwave clean!** If you use the microwave, make sure to clean it immediately after. Leaving microwaves dirty allows bacteria to grow and may contaminate the next person's food.
4. **Beware of Sponges!** A potentially dangerous habit is using a community sponge to wash dishes at the office. If the sponge is damp and smelly, it is probably harboring harmful bacteria. Simply rinsing it with water will not help, it should be thrown out. Instead of using a sponge, use paper towel and wash dishes in hot, soapy water.
5. **Carry-Out!** When bringing carry-out back to your desk, don't wait too long to eat it or it could begin to harbor bacteria. If you cannot eat it right away, then put it into the refrigerator until you are ready to eat.

## Helpful things to keep on your desk if you often eat there:

- Hand sanitizer
- Disinfectant wipes
- An ice pack with insulated lunch bag if there is not a refrigerator available
- A sharpie marker to label foods
- A meat thermometer, to use when reheating leftovers – which should be reheated to 165° F
- Plastic silverware

# “What’s in the News about Food Safety?”

## Food Safety Survey

A recent 2007 survey by the Center for Consumer Research asked 605 people from California to fill out a survey on safe food handling practices. The researchers found that people often need more education on the following food safety practices:

- The importance of refrigerating/freezing foods at the right temperature
- How to properly cool foods after they’ve been cooked before refrigerating/freezing, particularly by using small containers rather than large ones.
- Cross contamination.
- Cleaning surfaces and utensils with cleaners and sanitizers rather than just water.
- The fact that foods which look and taste OK may still contain bacteria – always check temperature and time cooked.
- The protective technologies of food irradiation.
- Getting food safety information from credible sources.

## Test your Knowledge! – Safe Food Handling Practices:

Q. Ground beef patties should be cooked until they are no longer pink.

A. FALSE - Hamburger should be cooked to at least 160°F. Always test the temperature of meat before eating. It should not be pink in color if it is cooked thoroughly, but do not rely on color to determine doneness.

Q. Pork cooked rare is completely safe to eat.

A. FALSE - For safety, the USDA recommends cooking ground pork patties and ground pork mixtures such as meat loaf to 160 °F. Whole muscle meats such as chops and roasts should be cooked to 160 °F (medium), or 170 °F (well done).

Q. Freezing food kills all bacteria that may cause illness.

A. FALSE - Freezing to 0 °F inactivates any microbes (bacteria, yeasts and molds) present in food. Once thawed, however, these microbes can again become active, multiplying under the right conditions to levels that can lead to foodborne illness. Since they will then grow at

about the same rate as microorganisms on fresh food, you must handle thawed items as you would any perishable food.

Trichina and other parasites can be destroyed by sub-zero freezing temperatures. However, very strict government-supervised conditions must be met. It is not recommended to rely on home freezing to destroy trichina. Thorough cooking will destroy all parasites.

Q. Cooked food should be cooled to room temperature before refrigerating or freezing.

A. FALSE - One of the most common causes of foodborne illness is improper cooling of cooked foods. Because bacteria are everywhere, even after food is cooked to a safe internal temperature, they can be reintroduced to the food and then begin to reproduce. For this reason, leftovers must be put in shallow containers for quick cooling and refrigerated within 2 hours.

Q. Perishable leftover foods can be safely kept at room temperature for several hours.

A. FALSE- Food should not be out of refrigeration for more than two hours because it is exposed to temperatures above 40°F. This is the temperature where harmful bacteria multiply rapidly. In hot weather (above 90°F), the time is reduced to one hour.

Q. Irradiation of meat or poultry will destroy bacteria which causes food-borne illness.

A. FALSE - Treated meats are still raw and need to be handled and cooked safely. Irradiation of food reduces the numbers of harmful bacteria that may be present in food, including *E. coli* O157:H7, *Salmonella*, and *Campylobacter*, but it does not replace safe cooking and handling.

Q. Irradiated food is considered safe by the major health and safety organizations.

A. TRUE! The FDA approved meat irradiation in December, 1997.

Here are some helpful web sites for more information on food safety:

- [www.foodsafety.gov/](http://www.foodsafety.gov/)
- [www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/](http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/)
- <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/home/index.asp>
- <http://www.who.int/foodsafety/en/>
- [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)
- <http://www.homefoodsafety.org/index.jsp>
- [www.fightbac.org/content/view](http://www.fightbac.org/content/view)
- [http://foodsafety.wisc.edu/teaching\\_foodsafety.html](http://foodsafety.wisc.edu/teaching_foodsafety.html)
- [www.michiganrestaurant.org](http://www.michiganrestaurant.org)

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## You Could Win!

Visit the Healthy Eating Tip of the Month Bulletin Board in the University Hospital cafeteria anytime during August to enter for a chance to win an insulated lunchbox with accessories!



The prize includes 1 soft, insulated lunchbox perfect for transporting foods to work or school!

## Works Cited

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