

# Food Safety



## The Basics

- ◆ Wash hands with warm, soapy water before and after handling food, especially raw meats, poultry, fish, or eggs.
- ◆ Use warm, soapy water to wash any utensil, dish, cutting board, or surface that comes in contact with one food before it touches another.
- ◆ Launder kitchen cloths and towels in hot, soapy water. Change them after each meal is prepared.
- ◆ Use thermometers to ensure food—especially meat—is cooked through.
- ◆ Keep the refrigerator at or below 40 degrees Fahrenheit, the freezer at or below 0 degrees Fahrenheit.

## Thawing Foods

- ◆ Defrost and marinate foods only in the refrigerator, never on the counter.
- ◆ If short on time, place frozen food in cold water to defrost, changing it every 30 minutes.
- ◆ Use the microwave to defrost food only if it is going to be served immediately.

## Leftovers

- ◆ Immediately after finishing a meal at home, put leftover food in shallow containers and into the refrigerator or freezer.
- ◆ Refrigerate leftovers from a restaurant within two hours of when it was originally served.
- ◆ Reheat all leftovers to 165 degrees Fahrenheit before serving.
- ◆ Do not eat foods that have been left out for longer than two hours at room temperature, or for longer than one hour in temperatures above 90 degrees.
- ◆ Eat or discard refrigerated leftovers within four days of original preparation.

## Packing Lunches

- ◆ Wash hands, kitchen utensils, and preparation surfaces with warm, soapy water immediately before and after preparing the lunch.
- ◆ Take cold foods from the refrigerator and put them in a cooler or tote with a cold-pack just before leaving the house. If preparing lunches the night before, put individual containers or baggies in the refrigerator, and pack the cooler or bag just before leaving the next morning.
- ◆ Fill insulated containers with boiling water and let them preheat for a few minutes prior to filling with hot foods.
- ◆ At lunch, eat foods right away, and put leftovers back in the container with a cold-pack, if applicable.
- ◆ Wash lunch coolers or totes each evening.