

HEALTH CARE

Safety education for provided by the insurance specialists at: Arbury Insurance Agency

TARGET ON SAFETY

Food Preparation Precautions

Introduction

Illness from foodborne pathogens such as Salmonella Enteritidis and E. coli is a legitimate concern for health care employees preparing food for patients and residents. According to the Department of Health and Family Services in Wisconsin, the elderly suffer from the most food-related illnesses of any age group. Furthermore, the incidence of foodborne illness outbreaks is prevalent in facilities such as nursing homes and hospitals, which puts the residents and patients at high risk.

Since an elderly person cannot recover from illness as quickly, it is important that you follow the proper food safety recommendations during food preparation at your facility.

Food Preparation Safety Recommendations

The key to safe food preparation is cleanliness in the kitchen. There are several things a safe cook should remember while preparing food for themselves and especially while preparing food for others. This includes:

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds before cooking and after handling raw meat
- Pull hair back with a net and cover any open cuts or sores
 - If you have an infected sore or cut, do not cook!
- Wash cooking spaces with a bleach solution according to the product's label
- Keep dishcloths clean and dry
 - Wet cloths harbor bacteria

- Clean the kitchen drain with a bleach solution regularly
- Use one cutting board for meats and another for ready-to-eat foods, such as vegetables
- Thoroughly sanitize cooking utensils before using them on other foods
- Clean plates and dishes used to prepare meat thoroughly before re-use
- Sanitize blenders used to mix raw eggs before using with other food products

Cooking Directives

To prevent foodborne illnesses, foods must be cooked to a specific minimum internal temperature as measured with a food thermometer. Please reference the chart on the next page to learn the temperatures certain foods must be cooked to.

FOOD	STYLE	TEMPERATURE
Beef	steaks and roasts	145°
Veal	steaks and chops	145°
Lamb	chops	145°
Pork	any style	145°
Ground Beef	any style	160°
Ground Pork	any style	160°
Ground Lamb	any style	160°
Egg	casseroles	160°
Poultry	any style	165°
Stuffing-outside of meat	N/A	165°

Food Storage

Various types of foods also have different shelf lives once they are in the refrigerator or freezer. It is necessary that you follow the recommended guidelines to prevent bacterial growth and subsequent illness.

FOOD	REFRIGERATOR (40° F)	FREEZER (0° F)
Fresh eggs with shells	3-5 weeks	Do NOT freeze
Hard boiled eggs	1 week	Do NOT freeze
Egg, chicken, ham or macaroni salad	3-5 days	Do NOT freeze
Hot dogs, opened	1 week	1-2 months
Hot dogs, unopened	2 weeks	1-2 months
Lunch meats, opened	3-5 days	1-2 months
Lunch meats, unopened	2 weeks	1-2 months
Fresh deli slices	3-5 days	Do NOT freeze
Soups and stews containing meat and vegetables	3-4 days	2-3 months
Ground meat and poultry	1-2 days	3-4 months
Bacon	7 days	1 month
Sausage	1-2 days	1-2 months
Ham (cooked, whole)	1 week	1-2 months
Ham (cooked, half)	3-5 days	1-2 months
Ham (cooked, slices)	3-4 days	1-2 months
Fresh beef (steaks, roasts)	3-5 days	6-12 months
Fresh pork (chops, roasts)	3-5 days	4-6 months
Fresh lamb (chops, roasts)	3-5 days	6-9 months
Fresh veal	3-5 days	4-8 months
Any cooked meat leftovers	3-4 days	2-3 months
Fresh chicken or turkey (whole)	1-2 days	1 year
Fresh chicken or turkey (pieces)	1-2 days	9 months
Any cooked poultry leftovers	3-4 days	4 months