

USING FOODS THAT ARE SAFE TO EAT



Foods that are safe for children to eat are:

- ♡ Not likely to cause choking
- ♡ Clean and wholesome
- ♡ Safely prepared, served, and stored
- ♡ Right for their age and development ^{NU71}

PROTECTING AGAINST CHOKING

Every 5 days a child in the United States dies from choking on food. The foods that are most commonly choked on are:

- ⊗ Hot dogs sliced in rounds
- ⊗ Whole grapes
- ⊗ Hard candy
- ⊗ Nuts

NU71 All food stored, prepared, or served must be microbiologically, chemically, and physically safe for human consumption.

NU41 Foods that are round, hard, small, thick and sticky, smooth, or slippery shall not be offered to children under 4 years of age. Examples of such foods include hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds), whole grapes, hard candy, nuts, seeds, raw peas, dried fruit, pretzels, chips, peanuts, popcorn, marshmallows, spoonfuls of peanut butter, and chunks of meat larger than can be swallowed whole.



CHANGE FOODS TO MAKE THEM SAFE
Some foods can be changed to make them safer for young children. Try these ideas:

FOOD	KIND OF CHANGE
Hot dogs	Cut in quarters lengthwise, then into small pieces
Whole grapes	Cut in half lengthwise
Nuts	Chop finely
Raw carrots	Chop finely or cut into thin strips
Peanut butter	Spread thinly on crackers; mix with applesauce and cinnamon and spread thinly on bread
Fish with bones	Remove the bones

PREVENT CHOKING!

Do not serve these foods to children under the age of 4. ^{NU41}

Spoonfuls of peanut butter	Hard candy
Mini-marshmallows	Popcorn
Large chunks of meat	Raw peas
Nuts, seeds, peanuts	Whole grapes
Raw carrots (<i>in rounds</i>)	Ice cubes
Fish with bones	Raisins
Other dried fruit	Pretzels, chips
Hot dogs (<i>whole or sliced into rounds</i>)	



NU44 The nutrition plan shall include steps to take when problems occur that require rapid response on the part of the staff (e.g., when a child chokes during mealtime). The completed plan shall be on file and accessible to staff.

NU73 Meat shall be from government-inspected sources or otherwise approved by the governing health authority.

NU74 All dairy products shall be pasteurized and Grade A where applicable.

NU75 Raw, unpasteurized milk or milk products shall not be used.

NU76 Dry milk and milk products may be reconstituted in the facility for cooking purposes only, provided they are prepared, refrigerated, and stored in a sanitary manner, labeled with the date of preparation, and used or discarded within 24 hours of preparation.

NU78 Fruits and vegetables shall be washed thoroughly with water prior to use.

Foods like these can cause choking because they are small enough or slippery enough to go down a child's throat before they are chewed. If these foods go down without being chewed, they may block the child's windpipe. It is important for you to take steps to protect children from choking.

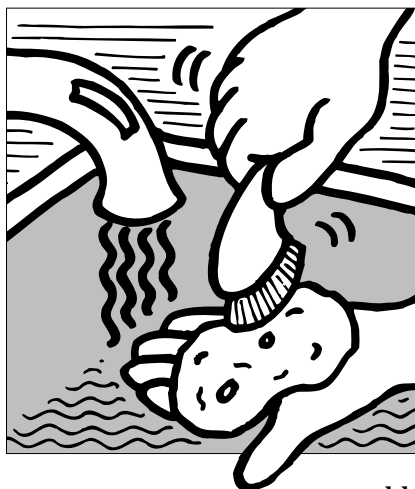
Make foods as safe as possible for young children. Every child is different. One child may be able to eat certain foods better than another child of the same age. Observe the children carefully so that you will know the best way to prepare food for each child.

Remember that young children can sometimes choke on foods that are usually safe. Make sure that a care provider is always present when children are eating. This person should know how to perform rescue breathing and what to do if a child chokes. **NU44**

CHOOSING CLEAN, WHOLESOME FOODS

Reduce the risk of food-borne illness by choosing clean, wholesome food.

- ☆ Use meat that has been government-inspected or approved by your local health authority. **NU73**
- ☆ Use pasteurized and Grade A milk products. **NU74**



- ☆ Do not use raw milk or unpasteurized milk products. **NU75**
- ☆ Use dry milk and dry milk products for cooking only. If you reconstitute them before using, be sure to refrigerate them safely. Label milk products with the date they were prepared, and discard them within 24 hours. **NU76** Remember, these products do not meet the Child and Adult Care Food Program milk requirement.
- ☆ The fresh fruits and vegetables that you serve to children should always be cleaned before they are eaten—raw or cooked. Always wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly with water, even if they look clean. **NU78**

Washing removes dirt, chemicals, and some bacteria. Using a food brush under running water helps to clean foods.



PROTECTING AGAINST SPOILED FOOD

Even if food looks and tastes good, it may cause a food-borne illness. Be sure to date foods that could spoil. The list below gives you tips on when to discard food.

(See also Figure 3.1, “Food Safety Checklist.”)



HOW TO TELL IF YOU SHOULD DISCARD FOOD

- ⦿ Look at the expiration date on unopened containers of food. Do not use food past this date—even if it looks okay.
- ⦿ Inspect food for spoilage every day. **NU72** How does it smell? How does it look? If a food smells spoiled or looks moldy, don’t serve it to children, and don’t eat it yourself. If food is moldy, throw it all out—don’t just take out the moldy part. **Remember, food does not have to look or smell bad to be unsafe.**
- ⦿ Do not use food in cans that are leaking or have bulges. **NU77** These bulges are caused by gas produced by dangerous bacteria inside the can.
- ⦿ Do not serve home-canned foods. **NU77** Bacteria may grow in improperly canned food and cause serious illness.
- ⦿ Do not use foods in unlabeled cans or packages without labels. **NU77**
- ⦿ Do not use food in cans that are dented or rusted, in jars that are cracked or have broken seals, or in packages that are torn. These openings may allow the food to be contaminated. **NU77**
- ⦿ Discard refrigerated leftovers within 24 hours.

WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

NU72 Foods shall be inspected daily for spoilage.

NU77 Home-canned food, food from dented, rusted, bulging, or leaking cans, and food from cans without labels shall not be used.



NU79 Frozen foods shall be defrosted in the refrigerator, under cold running water, as part of the cooking process, or by using the defrost setting of a microwave oven; they shall never be defrosted by leaving them at room temperature or in standing water, as in a pan or bowl.

NU81 Food shall be served promptly after preparation or cooking and/or maintained at temperatures of not less than 140°F for hot foods and not more than 40°F for cold foods.

NU80 Meat, fish, poultry, milk, and egg products shall be refrigerated until immediately before use.

NU84 Unserved food shall be promptly covered for protection from contamination, shall be refrigerated immediately, and shall

EGG SAFETY

- ♡ Keep eggs refrigerated.
- ♡ Do not use cracked eggs.
- ♡ Cook eggs until they are firm.
- ♡ Serve only fully cooked or pasteurized egg products.
- ♡ Do not give raw cookie dough, cake batter, or malta with raw eggs to children.

be used within 24 hours. Perishable foods that have been served and/or otherwise not maintained at safe temperatures for 2 hours or more shall be discarded.

EDITORS' NOTE: Revised time based on U.S. Public Health Service, FDA, *Food Code*, 1995.

PREPARING AND SERVING FOODS PROPERLY

Preparing food and serving it to children is an important part of your job.

Completely cook meat, fish, poultry, and eggs before serving. Cooking usually kills any harmful bacteria that could cause sickness. To be sure that

hamburger is done, cook it until it is brown or gray on the inside. Cook

chicken until the juices are clear when a fork or knife is stuck into it. A

good way to tell if meat is done is to use a meat

thermometer. Cook meat and poultry to 165°F for safety. Cook fish until it is opaque and flakes easily with a fork.



Always use a separate spoon for tasting and cooking.

Use a new spoon for each taste.

Plan ahead to thaw frozen foods in a safe way.

Defrost frozen foods in the refrigerator or under cold running water. This will keep them cool enough to slow the growth of bacteria. NEVER defrost frozen foods on the counter or in a bowl of standing water.

You may also defrost food as part of the cooking process—or in the microwave if you will cook the food right away. **NU79**

Keep cold foods cold until you serve them. Serve cold foods as soon as you take them out of the refrigerator—or keep them cool

(40°F or below). **NU81** Be

sure that meat, fish, poultry, milk, and egg products are kept in the refrigerator until you are ready to use them. **NU80** Likewise, keep hot foods

hot until they are served. Serve hot

foods right after they finish cooking—as soon as they are cool enough for children to eat safely—or keep them hot (140°F or above). **NU81** Don't leave them out to cool for too long. If foods that can spoil are left out at an unsafe temperature (between 40°F

and 140°F) for 4 or more hours, throw them out. **NU84**



Serve hot foods hot and cold foods cold!!



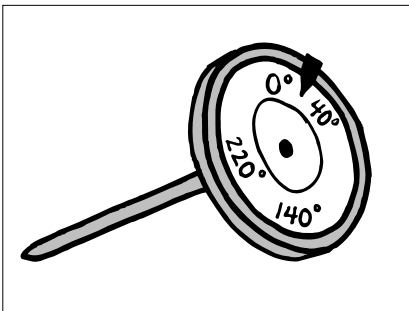
Always serve children food on clean plates or other cleaned and sanitized holders. Do not serve food on a bare table. **NU38** Serve commercially packaged baby food from a clean bowl or cup. **NU20**

NU38 Children's food shall be served on plates or other disinfected holders and shall not be placed on a bare table.

NU20
Commercially packaged baby food shall be served from a bowl or cup and not directly from the commercial container. Solid food shall be fed by spoon only. Uneaten food in dishes shall be discarded.

THERMOMETERS

Use thermometers when preparing, serving, and storing food. Keep food at the right temperature to keep it from spoiling and causing illness. You will need three kinds of thermometers:

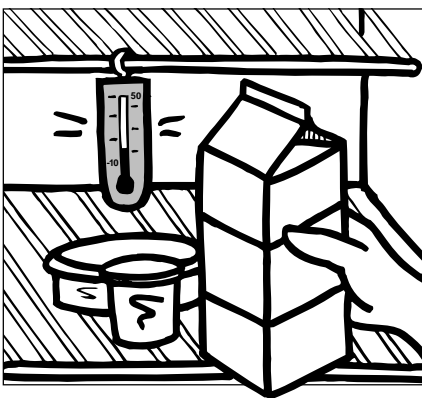
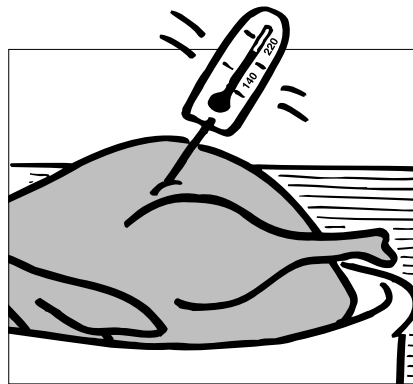


FOOD THERMOMETER

Use this thermometer (usually called a metal-stem thermometer) to test both hot and cold foods. Be sure that the temperature range on the thermometer is from 0°F to 220°F. Clean and sanitize the stem before each use.

MEAT THERMOMETER

Use this thermometer to be sure meat is cooked completely.



APPLIANCE THERMOMETER

Use this type of thermometer in both the refrigerator and the freezer. Your refrigerator should always be 40°F or below. Your freezer should always be 0°F or below. You can buy these types of thermometers at a grocery store, variety store, hardware store, or restaurant supplier.



NU85 All opened and spoilable potentially hazardous foods shall be dated, covered, and maintained at a temperature of 40°F or lower in the refrigerator or 0°F or lower in the freezer.

NU57 Refrigerators shall be used that maintain temperatures of 40°F or less in all parts of the food storage areas, and freezers shall maintain temperatures of 0°F or less in food storage areas.

NU58 Thermometers shall be provided in all refrigerators, freezers, ovens, and cold and hot food holding areas. Thermometers shall be clearly visible, easy to read, and accurate, and shall be kept in working condition and regularly checked.

NU86 All food stored in the refrigerator shall be covered, wrapped, or otherwise protected from contamination.

NU84 Unserved food shall be promptly covered for protection from contamination, shall be refrigerated immediately, and shall be used within 24 hours. Perishable foods that have been served and/or otherwise not maintained at safe temperatures for 2 hours or more shall be discarded.

EDITORS' NOTE: Revised time for safe temperatures based on U.S. Public Health Service, FDA, *Food Code*, 1995.

NU87 In the refrigerator, raw foods shall be stored below cooked or ready-to-eat foods.

STORING FOOD SAFELY

Store food safely before and after you cook it. Cover the food, date it, and keep it at the right temperature. **NU85** Keep an appliance thermometer in the refrigerator to be sure all parts of the food storage area are 40°F or below. Keep your refrigerator as cold as possible without freezing milk or lettuce. Make sure the freezer is at 0°F or below. **NU57** Check the thermometer at least once a month to be sure it is working, accurate, and visible. **NU58** You



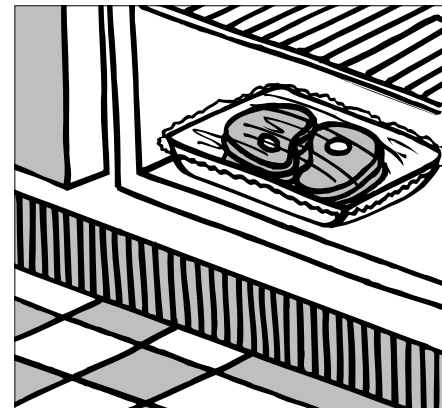
can check the thermometer by placing it in ice water. It should read 32°F.

Here are some tips for storing food in the refrigerator:



- * Cover or wrap all foods to protect them from contamination. **NU86**
- * Serve cooked foods stored in the refrigerator within 24 hours. **NU84**

- * Store meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products, and foods containing these in the coldest part of the refrigerator (usually toward the back).
- * Store raw foods on shelves below cooked or ready-to-eat foods to avoid contamination from drippings. **NU87**
- * Store raw meat, poultry, and seafood in large dishes to catch drippings.





- * Store unused baby food in the original jar with a tight lid.

A good idea is to serve half of it for breakfast or the morning snack, and use the other half for lunch. Discard what is left at the end of the day.



Here are some tips for storing dry foods safely:

- ☆ Store foods at least 6 inches above the floor in a clean, dry, well-ventilated storeroom. ^{NU89}
- ☆ Use a fan in the storeroom to improve air circulation and reduce spoilage.
- ☆ Store dry ingredients (rice, sugar, etc.) in containers that have tight-fitting lids and have no holes. This helps keep insects and rodents out. ^{NU89}
- ☆ Be sure that you can and do clean around the stored foods. ^{NU89}
- ☆ When you restock dry or canned foods, use the “First In, First Out” rule. Write the purchase date on the new foods and move them to the back of the storage area. Move the older foods to the front so that they will be used first.

NU89 Foods not requiring refrigeration shall be stored at least 6 inches above the floor in clean, dry, well-ventilated storerooms or other approved areas. Storage shall facilitate cleaning. Food products shall be stored in such a way (e.g., in nonporous containers off the floor) as to prevent insects and rodents from entering the product.

IF THE POWER GOES OUT . . .

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WITH FOOD IN THE REFRIGERATOR AND FREEZER?

- ⊙ Keep the door to both the refrigerator and the freezer closed as much as possible to help food last longer.
- ⊙ Don't remove food unless you know the power will be off more than 4 hours. A full, working freezer should keep food frozen for about 2 days. A half-full freezer will keep everything frozen for about 1 day. The refrigerator section will keep food cool for 4–6 hours, depending on the temperature of the kitchen.
- ⊙ Keep an appliance thermometer in the freezer. If the freezer is 40°F or colder when the power returns, all the food is safe.
- ⊙ You can refreeze any frozen food that contains ice crystals.
- ⊙ Do not refreeze any food that has completely thawed unless you cook it first. It is safe to cook food that has thawed as long as it did not warm to above 40°F.
- ⊙ Throw out any thawed food that has risen to a temperature of 40°F or more and remained there 4 or more hours. Immediately discard any food with a strange color or odor.



NU84 Unserved food shall be promptly covered for protection from contamination, shall be refrigerated immediately, and shall be used within 24 hours. Perishable foods that have been served and/or otherwise not maintained at safe temperatures for 2 hours or more shall be discarded.

EDITORS' NOTE: Revised time for safe temperatures based on U.S. Public Health Service, FDA, *Food Code*, 1995.

NU86 All food stored in the refrigerator shall be covered, wrapped, or otherwise protected from contamination.

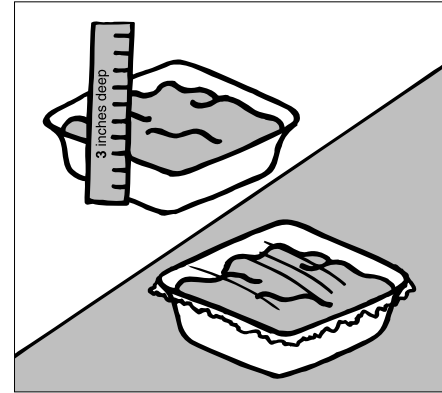
NU83 Food returned from individual plates and family-style serving bowls and potentially hazardous food that is not refrigerated shall be discarded.

NU20 Commercially packaged baby food shall be served from a bowl or cup and not directly from the commercial container. Solid food shall be fed by spoon only. Uneaten food in dishes shall be discarded.

(For information about storing specific foods, see Figure 2.3, “Food Storage Chart.”)

STORING LEFTOVERS

Did you cook more food than you needed? Cover and refrigerate or freeze any extra food right away if it has not been served. **NU84** NEVER leave cooked food on a counter or in an oven that has been turned off and is cooling down. These places provide ideal conditions for bacteria to grow. *Cool foods quickly in the refrigerator—*



divide large amounts of food into smaller portions and refrigerate them in shallow pans (less than 3 inches deep). Cover foods when they are cool. **NU86**

Discarding food

Throw out all potentially hazardous food returned from the dining table, including food from family-style serving bowls and food returned from individual plates. You may save bread and other foods that don't spoil if you serve them in a way that prevents contamination. **NU83** For example, cut bread in half or quarters so that a child can take less. The leftover bread can be used for bread crumbs, pudding, etc.

Discard any baby food left in dishes. Never put food from the dish back into the original container. This will help keep harmful germs from getting into the rest of the food. **NU20**

Reheating food

When reheating, bring liquids such as gravy, soup, or sauce to a boil. Heat other leftovers to 165°F. Reheat and reuse leftovers only one time. If they are not all eaten the second time, throw them out.



STORING OTHER ITEMS PROPERLY

Storing cleaning products

Store cleaning products carefully. Use one cabinet for storing them and other poisonous materials. A locked cabinet, out of children's reach, is best for storage. NEVER store food with cleaning products. NU92, NU93

Storing medications

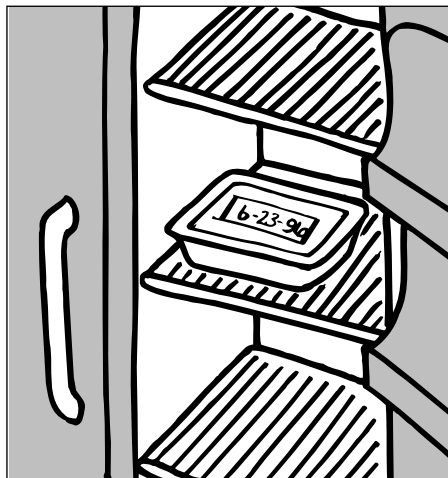
Label medications clearly with the child's name. Store medications away from food and at the proper temperature. Keep them out of the children's reach. NU94, HP85 If medications need to be refrigerated, put them in a covered leak-proof container that is identified as a container for the storage of medication. This will help keep the medication from spilling onto food.

FOOD BROUGHT FROM HOME

If parents bring breast milk, formula, or other food from home, store it properly. Label it with the child's name and the date. Protect all foods from contamination. Put foods that can spoil in the refrigerator or freezer immediately. Don't share food brought from home for one child with other children. NU47, NU48

Write a policy about bringing food from home. Policy must be dated. Be sure every parent gets a copy and understands why you have this policy. Keep written agreements about bringing food from home on file.

NU47



NU92 When cleaning agents cannot be stored separately and must be stored in the same room with food, these supplies shall be clearly labeled and kept separated from food items in separate cabinets that are inaccessible to children.

NU93 Poisonous or toxic materials shall be stored in an area separate from the food storage area and shall be inaccessible to children.

NU94 Medications requiring refrigeration shall be stored as specified in Medications.

HP85 All medications, refrigerated or unrefrigerated, shall have child-protective caps, shall be kept in an orderly fashion, shall be stored away from food at the proper temperature, and shall be inaccessible to children. Medication shall not be used beyond the date of expiration.

NU47 Meals may be provided by the parent or legal guardian upon written agreement between the parent and the staff.

Lunches and supplements (snacks) provided by the parent or legal guardian shall not be shared with other children. Potentially hazardous and perishable foods shall be refrigerated properly (as specified in Food Safety) and all foods shall be protected against contamination.

NU48 Food brought into the facility shall have a label showing the child's name, the date, and the type of food.



NU49 The facility shall inform the parents of the nutritional requirements established by the facility and suggest ways to meet them. The facility shall have food available to supplement a child's food brought from home if it is deficient in meeting the child's nutrient requirements. If the food provided by the parent consistently does not meet the nutritional or food safety requirements, the facility shall provide the food or refer the parent for consultation to a child care nutrition specialist or to the child's primary source of health care.

NU48 Food brought into the facility shall have a label showing the child's name, the date, and the type of food.



SAMPLE POLICIES

SOME FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME PROVIDERS ALLOW:

- ✦ Food to be brought from home only on special occasions, such as birthdays, holidays, etc.
- ✦ Food to be brought from home if it meets certain guidelines. For example, it must be store bought and in its original package, and there must be enough for all the children.
- ✦ Food to be brought from home for special events such as a "lunch box day" on Fridays. Parents are given the requirements for the lunch meal, and all the children bring a lunch from home.

If an agreement has been made with the parents to allow them to send food from home:

- ☛ Use your menus as a guide for helping parents understand how to meet their child's daily food needs. **NU49**
- ☛ Ask the parents to send foods that meet any requirements (such as Child and Adult Care Food Program) for meals the child will eat while in your care. **NU49**
- ☛ Ask the parents to wrap and label the food that is brought from home. It should have the child's name, the date, and the type of food. **NU48**
- ☛ If the food sent from home often does not meet the child's needs, have other food available for the child to eat. Refer the parents to a child care nutrition specialist or the child's primary care provider for help. **NU49**

Some providers never allow children to bring food from home. They find it safer and easier to provide any special foods the children need.



PREPARED FOOD PURCHASED FROM OUTSIDE SOURCE

If you buy prepared food from an outside source, such as a deli or other food company, make sure that the source is approved and inspected by the local health authority. ^{NU102} Serve only prepared food that has been transported promptly in clean, covered containers maintained at the proper temperature. Hot foods should stay at 140°F or higher and cold foods should stay at 40°F or less. ^{NU103} Use a food thermometer to check the temperature of foods as soon as they arrive. Reject foods that have not been kept at safe temperatures.

LEARNING TO WORK WITH FOOD SAFELY

In a family child care home, you are responsible for feeding the children in your care. If others work with you and prepare food, they will need training about food safety and the importance of foods to the health of young children. ^{ST52} Go to one of these local resources for help: your licensing agency or resource and referral agency, a child care nutrition specialist, a nutritionist at the local health department, a nutritionist working in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), the Cooperative Extension Service, or a registered dietitian (e.g., at a local hospital). Whenever you have a question or problem, try to use the same person for consistency and continuity.

For the safety of the children, pay attention to your own illnesses and injuries, and those of anyone who works with food. Caregivers and helpers should not prepare food if:

- ⊙ They have signs or symptoms of illness, including fever, sore throat with fever, jaundice, vomiting, diarrhea, and infectious skin sores that cannot be covered.
- ⊙ They are possibly or definitely infected with bacteria or viruses that can be carried in food.
- ⊙ They have open or infected injuries that are not covered with an impermeable cover (e.g., finger cot) and a latex glove. ^{NU69}

Ask your local health department about getting a food manager's (or food handler's) card for anyone who works with food.

NU102 Food provided by a central kitchen or vendor to off-site locations shall be obtained from sources approved and inspected by the local health authority.

NU103 After preparation, food shall be transported promptly in clean, covered, and temperature-controlled containers. Hot potentially hazardous foods shall be maintained at temperatures of not less than 140°F, and cold potentially hazardous foods shall be maintained at temperatures of 40°F or less until the food is served.

ST52 All staff members with food-handling responsibilities shall be trained in proper food handling.

NU69 No one who has signs or symptoms of illness, including vomiting, diarrhea, and infectious skin sores that cannot be covered, or who is potentially or actually infected with bacteria or viruses that can be carried in food, shall be responsible for food handling. No one with open or infected injuries shall work in the food preparation area unless the injuries are covered with nonporous (e.g., latex) gloves.



FIGURE 3.1

FOOD SAFETY CHECKLIST

SHOPPING

- Check the expiration date on all packaged foods.
- Do not buy any food in damaged wrappers, dented cans, or broken packages.
- Make sure that frozen foods are frozen solid before buying them. (Check to see if outside of package is discolored.)
- Buy only pasteurized apple cider.

STORING RAW PERISHABLE FOODS

- Store potentially hazardous food in the refrigerator or freezer immediately.
- Place raw meat, poultry, or seafood below ready-to-eat foods in the refrigerator so that the juices don't get onto the ready-to-eat foods.
- Keep a working thermometer in both the refrigerator and the freezer.
- Check each day to make sure the refrigerator thermometer is at 40°F and the freezer thermometer is at 0°F.

HAND WASHING

- Wash hands thoroughly with warm, soapy water before beginning to cook.

COOKING

- Plan ahead to thaw frozen meats in the refrigerator, in a cold running water bath, or as a part of cooking instead of on the counter.
- Use a meat thermometer to be sure meats were cooked thoroughly.
- Inspect packaged foods carefully to make sure the can or wrapper was not damaged.
- Wash fresh vegetables and fruits with water before serving or cooking.
- Cook everything thoroughly, especially meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs.

SERVING

- Keep hot foods hot (140°F or above) and cold foods cold (40°F or below) until they are served.
- Check the temperature of foods using a thermometer.
- Cut foods to the right size for the children.
- Spread peanut butter thinly.
- Take the seeds out of fruit and the bones out of fish.

STORING LEFTOVERS

- Cool leftovers quickly in shallow pans.
- Refrigerate or freeze leftovers immediately.



FIGURE 3.2

FOOD STORAGE CHART

This chart has information about keeping foods safely in the refrigerator or freezer. It does not include foods that can be stored safely in the cupboard or on the shelves—where quality may be more of an issue than safety.

FOOD	IN REFRIGERATOR	IN FREEZER
EGGS		
Fresh, in shell	3 weeks	Don't freeze
Raw yolks, whites	2–4 days	1 year
Hardcooked	1 week	Don't freeze
Liquid pasteurized eggs or egg substitutes, opened	3 days	Don't freeze
unopened	10 days	1 year
MAYONNAISE		
Commercial, refrigerate after opening	2 months	Don't freeze
TV DINNERS, FROZEN CASSEROLES		
Keep frozen until ready to heat and serve		3–4 months
DELI AND VACUUM-PACKED PRODUCTS		
Store-prepared or homemade egg, chicken, tuna, ham, macaroni salads	3–4 days	Don't freeze
Pre-stuffed pork and lamb chops, stuffed chicken breasts	1 day	Don't freeze
Store-cooked convenience meals	1–2 days	Don't freeze
Commercial brand vacuum-packed dinners with USDA seal	2 weeks, unopened	Don't freeze
HAMBURGER, GROUND, AND STEW MEATS		
Hamburger and stew meats	1–2 days	3–4 months
Ground turkey, chicken, veal, pork, lamb, and mixtures of them	1–2 days	3–4 months

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FIGURE 3.2 (CONTINUED)

FOOD STORAGE CHART (CONTINUED)

FOOD	IN REFRIGERATOR	IN FREEZER
HOTDOGS AND LUNCH MEATS*		
Hotdogs, opened package	1 week	
unopened package	2 weeks	In freezer wrap, 1–2 months
Lunch meats, opened	3–5 days	
unopened	2 weeks	In freezer wrap, 1–2 months
Deli sliced ham, turkey, lunch meats	2–3 days	1–2 months
BACON AND SAUSAGE		
Bacon	1 week	1 month
Sausage, raw from pork, beef, turkey	1–2 days	1–2 months
Smoked breakfast links or patties	1 week	1–2 months
Hard Sausage–pepperoni, jerky sticks	2–3 weeks	1–2 months
HAM		
Canned, unopened, label says keep refrigerated	6–9 months	Don't freeze
Fully cooked—whole	7 days	1–2 months
Fully cooked—half	3–5 days	1–2 months
Fully cooked—slices	3–4 days	1–2 months
FRESH MEAT		
Steaks, beef	3–5 days	6–12 months
Chops, pork	3–5 days	4–6 months
Chops, lamb	3–5 days	6–9 months
Roasts, beef	3–5 days	6–12 months
Roasts, lamb	3–5 days	6–9 months
Roasts, pork and veal	3–5 days	4–6 months
FRESH POULTRY		
Chicken or turkey, whole	1–2 days	1 year
Chicken or turkey pieces	1–2 days	9 months
Giblets	1–2 days	3–4 months
FRESH SEAFOOD		
Fish and shellfish	2 days	2–4 months

*Uncooked salami is not recommended because recent studies have found that the processing does not always kill the E. coli bacteria. Look for the label to say "Fully Cooked."