

Standard 10

Food Safety

Share basic recommendations to help families be food safe.

Why is this Standard important?

Food safety is a term that describes the handling, preparation and storage of food in ways that prevent foodborne illness. While there is potential risk for anyone to get sick from eating unsafe food, there are certain groups of people that are at a greater risk. Older adults, pregnant women, young children and people with weak immune systems are at a greater risk of getting sick from foodborne illness. Understanding proper food safety practices is even more important in these instances to help them stay healthy.

As a home visitor, you can play an important role in teaching families simple and basic food safety practices to help families avoid foodborne illness.

Help Families Be Food Safe:

The Basics: Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill

Learning about food safety can be summarized through four basic steps: clean, separate, cook and chill food. Following these steps will help limit the growth of bacteria that can make families sick and spoil food.

Clean: Wash Hands, Surfaces and Produce

Wash Your Hands

Parents, caregivers and children should wash their hands after any of the following:

- Before eating or preparing food
- After handling raw eggs, meat, poultry, seafood or their juices
- After using the bathroom
- After coughing or sneezing
- After changing a diaper

Parents and caregivers can teach children to wash their hands through song. Follow these steps with children while singing the “Happy Birthday” song:

- 1) Wet your hands under running water and add soap.
- 2) Rub your hands together until bubbles appear. Scrub hands well. Don't forget the backs, between fingers and under the nails.
- 3) Rub your hands together for 20 seconds—two rounds of “Happy Birthday.”
- 4) Rinse under running water. Dry hands with a clean towel or air dry.

Wash Surfaces

Clean countertops, cutting boards and utensils to stop the spread of harmful bacteria. Clean each surface with hot, soapy water after preparing each item and before moving to the next.

Wash Produce

Clean fruits and vegetables under running water, even if they will be peeled. Cut away any bruised or damaged areas. Use a produce brush to scrub firm items like potatoes or cantaloupe. Bagged produce labeled "prewashed" is ready to eat and does not need to be washed again.

Meat, poultry, seafood and eggs do not need to be washed before use.

Separate: Limit Risk of Cross-Contamination

Use Separate Surfaces

Cross-contamination can occur when bacteria from one item is transferred to another. This can cause foodborne illness. To avoid cross-contamination, share the following with families:

- Use separate cutting boards, plates and utensils for raw, uncooked food and cooked food.
- Use one cutting board for fresh produce and one for raw meat, poultry or seafood.
- Clean all plates, cutting boards and utensils thoroughly before using them again.
- Consider replacing cutting boards when they become heavily marked with deep, hard-to-clean grooves.

Keep Raw Food Separate from Cooked Food and Fresh Produce

- Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs separate from other items in the grocery cart.
- Store raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs separately from ready-to-eat foods in the refrigerator.
- Freeze meat, poultry and seafood that isn't going to be cooked within a few days.

Cook: Keep Hot Foods Hot

Use a Thermometer When Cooking

- Cook food to the proper minimum internal temperature.
- Keep hot foods hot after preparation (140°F or above).

**Refer to Minimum Cooking Temperature Chart for more detailed guidance.*

Chill: Keep Cold Foods Cold

Refrigerate Promptly and Properly

- Refrigerators should be cooled to between 32° and 40°F. Freezers should be 0°F or below.
- Don't overfill a refrigerator or freezer—air needs to circulate to keep food cool.
- Chill and store perishable foods within 2 hours of cooking.

Thaw Foods Safely

- Do not thaw meat on the countertop.
- Place frozen meat in the refrigerator to thaw before cooking.

Breast Milk and Infant Formula

Families with infants may have additional questions about how to properly handle, store and prepare breast milk and infant formula. The following guidelines and recommendations can help families feed their baby safely.

Breast Milk Storage

- Milk can be stored in the refrigerator for up to five days.
- Frozen milk can be stored for at least six months in the freezer.

Breast Milk Storage Containers

- Expressed breast milk can be safely stored in glass, hard plastic bottles, plastic freezer bags or storage bags specifically designed for storing human milk. Choose containers that do not have Bisphenol A (BPA).
- When storing milk in bottles, wash in hot water and air dry. The bottles do not need to be sterilized.
- Milk will expand when it is frozen, so leave room at the top if you plan to freeze.
- Only put 2-4 ounces into each container or the amount your baby eats at a single feeding.

**For detailed breast milk storage guidelines, see ADHS Breast Milk Storage Guidelines on page 35.*

Infant Formula Preparation

- Take care to prepare infant formula according to manufacturer instructions—do not add more or less water than is recommended. This alters the nutritional value and can be harmful to the baby's digestive system.
- Bottles, nipples and bottle rings can be washed in the dishwasher. Some experts still recommend boiling for five minutes to sanitize.
- If water safety is a concern, use bottled water or boiled tap water to prepare infant formula.

Storing Prepared Infant Formula

- Leftover prepared formula must be discarded within one hour after feeding a baby.
- Prepared formula that has not been given to a baby may be stored in the refrigerator for 24 hours in a covered container.
- An open container of ready-to-feed formula, concentrate formula or formula prepared from concentrate formula should be covered, refrigerated and discarded after 48 hours if not used.



Arizona Department of Health Services Breastmilk Storage Guidelines

Location	Temperature	Duration	Comments
Countertop, table	Room Temperature (up to 77°F or 25°C)	6-8 hours	Containers should be covered and kept as cool as possible; covering the container with a cool towel may keep milk cooler.
Insulated cooler bag	5-39°F or -15-4°C	24 hours	Keep ice packs in contact with milk containers at all times; limit opening the cooler bag.
Refrigerator	39°F or 4°C	5 days	Store milk in the back of the main body of the refrigerator.
Freezer			Store milk towards the back of the freezer, where temperature is most constant. Milk stored for longer durations in the ranges listed is safe, but some lipids in the milk undergo degradation, resulting in lower quality.
Freezer compartment of refrigerator	5°F or -15°C	2 weeks	
Freezer compartment of refrigerator with separate doors	0°F or -18°C	3-6 months	
Chest or upright deep freezer	-4°F or -20°C	6-12 months	

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics



Safe Minimum Cooking Temperatures

Category	Food	Temperature (°F)	Rest Time
Ground Meat & Meat Mixtures	Beef, pork, veal, lamb	160	None
	Turkey, chicken	165	None
Fresh Beef, Veal, Lamb	Steaks, roasts, chops	145	3 minutes
Poultry	Chicken & turkey, whole	165	None
	Poultry breasts, roasts	165	None
	Poultry thighs, legs, wings	165	None
	Duck & goose	165	None
	Stuffing (cooked alone or in bird)	165	None
Pork & Ham	Fresh pork	145	3 minutes
	Fresh ham (raw)	145	3 minutes
	Precooked ham (to reheat)	140	None
Eggs & Egg Dishes	Eggs	Cook until yolk and white are firm.	None
	Egg dishes	160	None
Leftovers & Casseroles	Leftovers	165	None
	Casseroles	165	None
Seafood	Fin Fish	145 or cook until flesh is opaque and separates easily with a fork.	None
	Shrimp, lobster, and crab	Cook until flesh is pearly and opaque.	None
	Clams, oysters, and mussels	Cook until shells open during cooking.	None
	Scallops	Cook until flesh is milky white or opaque and firm.	None

Source: www.FoodSafety.gov