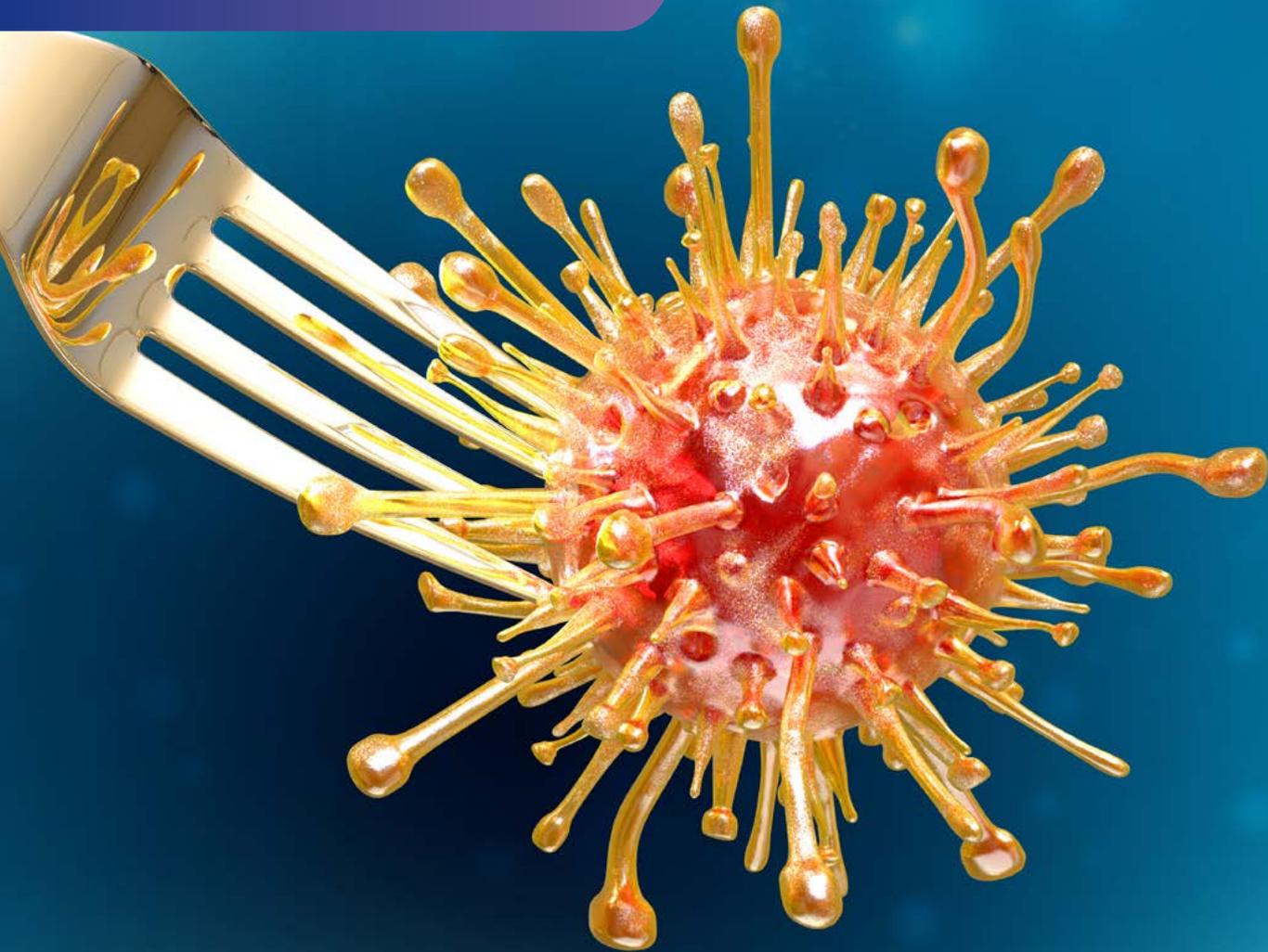


Food Safety for Support Workers





In the spirit of reconciliation Premium Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

OUR PROMISE



**Premium Quality,
without compromise.
It's the Premium Health
promise.**



Phillipa Wilson

Founder & Managing Director of Premium Health

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**Specialised Training,
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Welcome to your course and Premium Health.

The aim of this resource is to provide the essential knowledge and skills required in your training.

We select our Premium Health trainers and assessors carefully. All are either nurses or paramedics with appropriate training qualifications, technical expertise and experience.

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR COURSE

Welcome

The aim of this resource is to assist direct support workers to understand the principles and practices to safely prepare food for others.

The resource also focuses on the responsibilities for those handling food, cooking and cooling food, the safe practices when handling and storing food and the importance of cleaning and waste management.

Evaluation of the course

Your feedback is vitally important to us as we use this as part of our continuous improvement process. We especially value any personal comments you would like to make. Your trainer will provide you with the way to access the feedback survey.

Premium Health's customer service

We offer you an on-going service in relation to your course and invite you to call our office on **1300 721 292** or email us on customerservice@premiumhealth.com.au.

For more information about Premium Health and our health care, mental health and first aid courses, please access our website www.premiumhealth.com.au

FOOD SAFETY

Australia has a safe, reliable and healthy food supply; however, cases of food poisoning still occur. It is estimated that more than 5 million cases of food poisoning are reported in Australia each year, both through businesses and at home.

Australian businesses and not-for-profit organisations are responsible for following strict health and hygiene obligations as set out by the Australian and New Zealand Food Standards whilst handling, storing, and serving food. This is to help in the prevention of food-related illnesses. This information is also important for individuals, as many cases of food poisoning happen at home.

FOOD SAFETY HAZARDS

A food safety hazard is a biological, chemical or physical agent, or condition of food, with the potential to cause harm or an adverse health affect when the food is eaten.

Any business should aim to reduce the risk of these hazards in its food processing and service, ensuring the food is safe to consume. Systems and procedures should be in place to keep food safe and reduce the risk of these hazards.

BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS



Hazards which live within food can occur from multiple sources. These microorganisms (commonly called "germs") are so small they can only be seen under a microscope. Not all microorganisms are harmful to humans. Pathogens are the microorganisms which cause harm to humans when they reach a high level in food.

Some examples are:

- bacteria e.g., salmonella, staphylococcus aureus, bacillus cereus
- yeasts
- moulds
- viruses e.g., hepatitis A, influenza
- protozoa e.g., Giardia

CHEMICAL HAZARDS



Chemical hazards which can be found in food include:

- naturally occurring poisonous chemicals (poison plants such as rhubarb leaves and, mushrooms, poisonous animals such as puffer fish, algal blooms, mould toxins, etc)
- chemicals added via water
- agricultural chemicals from soils, plants, and animals (pesticides, antibiotics, dips, heavy metals, etc)
- chemicals added during food processing (additives, cleaners, etc)

PHYSICAL HAZARDS



Physical hazards which can be found in food include:

- objects naturally present in the food (animal hair, bone chips, leaves, etc)
- objects occurring in agriculture (dirt, manure, leaves, etc)
- objects added during processing (glass, plastic, hair, metal, etc)

Reducing physical hazards is relatively simple in most hospitality businesses as they are physically visible in the food. They are normally controlled by procedures such as a visual inspection of food and ensuring protocols such as 'no wood' or 'no glass' are in place, as well as ensuring food is kept covered.

Most food poisoning illness is a result of biological microorganisms growing in food. When food is in moist, warm conditions, they multiply to an "infective dose" which makes a person ill. Food handlers should know about food poisoning bacteria and the conditions they require for growth, to ensure food borne illness is avoided.

FOOD POISONING

Food poisoning is the name for the range of illnesses caused by eating or drinking contaminated food or beverages. It is also sometimes referred to as food borne illness. It is quite common, affecting an estimated 5.4 million Australians each year. The symptoms can be unpleasant, and for some people they can be quite serious.



Types

Most food poisoning is caused by harmful bugs (pathogens) getting into food. The most common types of food poisoning fall into the following categories:

- **Bacterial** e.g., Salmonella, Campylobacter, E. coli and Listeria Bacillus cereus Clostridium perfringens
- **Viral** e.g., Norovirus, Rotavirus and Hepatitis A
- **Intoxication** caused by the toxins produced by some bacteria or pathogens such as Staphylococcus aureus and Toxoplasma gondii



Some of these bugs can also be transferred from person-to-person with or without symptoms, or via contaminated surfaces. It is important to note that those with allergies and intolerances to specific foods or ingredients may suffer similar symptoms as food poisoning, however this it is not considered food poisoning.

Food allergies and intolerances can still be very serious and even life threatening.

BACTERIAL

SALMONELLA

Salmonella is the name of a group of bacteria that causes the infection salmonellosis. Salmonella is one of the most common bacterial causes of diarrhoea and the most common cause of food borne-related hospitalisations and deaths in Australia. Because Salmonella bacteria can live in the intestinal tract of humans and other animals it can be easily transferred to food through contaminated soil or water from the faeces of animals or people, for example from animal manure, sewerage, or dirty hands unless proper hygiene and appropriate cooking methods are used.



High-risk food

- raw and undercooked eggs
- undercooked poultry and meat
- contaminated raw fruits and vegetables
- unpasteurised milk and other dairy products

Symptoms

- diarrhoea, cramps, nausea, vomiting, fever, and headaches
- illness can become more complicated from severe dehydration, requiring hospitalisation
- onset within 12 to 36 hours after eating contaminated food
- most people are sick for 4 to 7 days, but can be sick for longer

Prevention

- Cook food thoroughly, especially poultry and eggs.
- Don't use dirty or cracked eggs.
- Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly under running water.
- Keep cold food at 5 degrees or colder and cooked hot food at 60 degrees or hotter before consuming.
- Avoid cross contamination by using separate cutting boards and knives for raw chicken and ready-to-eat food.
- Store cooked food separately from raw food.
- Keep leftovers in fridge or freezer and dispose of refrigerated leftovers within 3-4 days (1 day for vulnerable people).
- Wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly before preparing and eating food.
- Keep kitchen and equipment clean.
- Dry dishes using a different cloth to that used for wiping hands or bench tops.
- Wash dish cloths regularly.
- Follow storage instructions on the product label.

CAMPYLOBACTER

Campylobacter is a bacteria that can cause a gastrointestinal disease called Campylobacteriosis. It is another common cause of food-related disease in Australia and is frequently associated with the consumption of contaminated poultry. Infection can occur at any time of the year but is more common in the warmer months.



High-risk foods

- contaminated poultry
- contaminated water or unpasteurised milk

Symptoms

- diarrhoea, cramping, abdominal pain, and fever
- illness can last 1 to 2 weeks
- onset within 2 to 5 days
- on rare occasion, the bacteria can enter the bloodstream and cause serious illness

Prevention

- Cook food thoroughly, especially poultry.
- Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly under running water.
- Keep cold food at 5 degrees or colder and cooked hot food at 60 degrees or hotter before consuming.
- Store raw foods (such as poultry and meat) in sealed containers in the bottom of the fridge or freezer to prevent any fluid dripping or spilling onto other ready-to eat food.
- Cover all foods in the refrigerator and freezer to protect them from contamination.
- Wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly after handling raw foods and before handling cooked or ready-to-eat food.
- Wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly before preparing and eating food.
- Avoid cross contamination by using separate cutting boards and knives for raw chicken and ready-to-eat food.
- Keep kitchen and equipment clean.
- Follow storage instructions on the product label.
- Dry dishes using a different cloth to that used for wiping hands or bench tops.
- Wash dish cloths regularly.

ESCHERICHIA COLI (E. COLI)

E. coli is a bacteria that is found in the gastrointestinal tract of humans and animals, particularly cattle and sheep. Most E. coli is harmless, but when they become pathogenic, also known as shigatoxigenic E. coli (STEC), they can cause illness. Pathogenic E. coli can be found in soil, water, and food from the faeces of livestock or animal manure.



High-risk foods

- contaminated ground meat, especially beef mince and salami
- unpasteurised milk products
- leafy salads and sprouted seeds

Symptoms

- diarrhoea, abdominal cramps, nausea and vomiting
- onset within 2 to 10 days
- illness can last 5 to 10 days
- on rare occasion, it can cause haemolytic uraemia syndrome (HUS) which can develop a week after symptoms starts. This syndrome causes reduced urine output, reduced consciousness, bruising, exhaustion and in some serious cases kidney failure, seizures, anaemia and death

Prevention

- Cook raw minced meat, including burgers and sausages thoroughly (no visible pink meat).
- Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly under running water.
- Wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly before preparing and eating food.
- Store raw foods (such as poultry and meat) in sealed containers in the bottom of the fridge or freezer to prevent any fluid dripping or spilling onto other ready-to eat food.
- Avoid cross contamination by using separate cutting boards and knives for raw meats and ready-to-eat food.
- Avoid consuming unpasteurised milk products.

LISTERIA

Listeria are bacteria that can cause a serious illness called listeriosis. Whilst relatively uncommon in healthy people and causing few or no symptom, it can be very dangerous for those people at risk. At risk people include pregnant women and their unborn or newborn child, older people, and those with a weakened immune system. Listeria is found widely in the environment and storing contaminated foods, even in the fridge, will allow the bacteria to grow. It may also not be destroyed by cooking.

High-risk foods

- foods which are not cooked thoroughly
- ready-to-eat foods from salad bars, sandwich bars, delicatessens, and buffets
- some foods past their 'best before' or 'use-by' date
- any unpasteurised milk or milk products
- soft-serve ice-creams
- soft cheeses, such as brie, camembert, ricotta, and feta (these are safe if cooked and served hot)

**Symptoms are:**

- few to no symptoms in healthy adults
- headache, fever, tiredness, aches and pains less
- diarrhoea, nausea and abdominal cramps are less common

Prevention

- Cook food thoroughly.
- Keep cold food at 5 degrees or colder and cooked hot food at 60 degrees or hotter before consuming.
- Store raw foods (such as poultry and meat) in sealed containers in the bottom of the fridge or freezer to prevent any fluid dripping or spilling onto other ready-to eat food.
- Cover all foods in the refrigerator and freezer to protect them from contamination.
- Wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly after handling raw foods and before handling cooked or ready-to-eat food.
- Wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly before preparing and eating food.
- Avoid cross contamination by using separate cutting boards and knives for raw chicken and ready-to-eat food.
- Keep kitchen and equipment clean.
- Make smart food choices.

BACILLUS CEREBUS

Bacillus cereus (*B. cereus*) is a type of bacteria which is widespread in the environment and can produce spores and toxins that are not destroyed by cooking or boiling.



High-risk foods

- pre-cooked starchy foods like rice, pasta and cereals
- pre-cooked mixed dishes, especially spiced dishes

Symptoms

- vomiting and diarrhoea in anyone, however vulnerable people such as young children, pregnant women, and the elderly and those with weak immune systems (like cancer patients) can become seriously ill
- onset within 1 to 16 hours
- most people recover in a day or less

Prevention

- Cook food thoroughly and serve immediately or at least 60 degrees or hotter before serving.
- Cool food quickly if to be consumed later - place in fridge/freezer as soon as steaming stops.
- Keep leftovers in fridge or freezer and dispose of refrigerated leftovers within 3-4 days (1 day for vulnerable people).
- Wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly before preparing and eating food.
- Keep kitchen and equipment clean.

CLOSTRIDIUM PERFRINGENS (C.PERFRINGENS)



C. perfringens is a type of bacteria that is widespread in the environment, it is also in the gastrointestinal tract of people and animals and produce spores and toxins that are not destroyed by cooking or boiling.

High-risk foods

- contaminated meat and poultry
- thickened sauces such as gravy
- pre-cooked foods, especially spiced and herbed dishes

Symptoms

- mild abdominal cramps and diarrhoea
- in some cases, nausea, vomiting and fever
- onset is 6 to 24 hours
- most people recover in a day or less

Prevention

- Cook food thoroughly and serve immediately or at least 60 degrees or hotter before serving.
- Cool food quickly if to be consumed later - place in fridge/freezer as soon as steaming stops.
- Keep leftovers in fridge or freezer and dispose of refrigerated leftovers within 3-4 days (1 day for vulnerable people).
- Wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly before preparing and eating food.
- Keep kitchen and equipment clean.

VIRAL

NOROVIRUS

Norovirus is highly infectious and is a virus which can be found in the gastrointestinal tract of people. It can get into water and food from the faeces or vomit of infected people and can stay infectious in the environment for long periods of time. It can be transferred via food, or contaminated utensils such as cutlery and crockery. It may also not be destroyed by common disinfectants.



High-risk foods

- shellfish (e.g., oysters)
- contaminated food which won't be cooked further

Symptoms

- frequent vomiting and watery diarrhoea, nausea, muscle aches, headaches, and low fever
- onset usually within 24 – 48 hours of exposure
- illness can last 1 to 3 days

Prevention

- Wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly before preparing and eating food, especially after using the toilet or changing nappies.
- Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly under running water.
- Avoid eating raw shellfish.
- If you are sick with norovirus, or norovirus symptoms, you should not prepare food for others until 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.
- Keep kitchen and equipment clean.

ROTAVIRUS

Rotavirus is a highly contagious disease that is caused by contact with someone infected with rotavirus. It can lead to dehydration, shock and sometimes death and can be transferred via contaminated food or surfaces. It is, however, generally preventable through vaccination.



High-risk foods

- any food or utensil contaminated by virus

Symptoms

- vomiting, sudden diarrhoea, dry mouth, drowsiness
- onset usually within 1 to 3 days
- illness can last 3 to 7 days

Prevention

- Wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly before preparing and eating food, especially after using the toilet or changing nappies.
- Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly under running water.
- If you are sick with rotavirus, or rotavirus symptoms, you should not prepare food for others until 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.
- Keep kitchen and equipment clean.

HEPATITIS A

In 2015 and 2017, cases of hepatitis A were linked to consumption of imported frozen ready-to-eat berries. Therefore, in response to this, Australia introduced new requirements for frozen berries being imported from all countries.

Hepatitis A affects the liver and is a disease caused by the hepatitis A virus. Unlike hepatitis B and C, it doesn't cause chronic (long-lasting) liver disease. In most hepatitis A cases, a person's immune system will clear the infection and the liver will completely heal. The virus can survive several hours outside of the body and is resistant to heating and freezing.



High-risk foods

- food grown in contaminated water
- produce that is washed in contaminated water
- produce being picked or packed by a person infected with Hepatitis A

Symptoms

- fever, nausea, abdominal discomfort, dark coloured urine, pain the liver, loss of appetite, yellow skin, and eyes (jaundice)
- onset is usually within 28 days, however sometimes anywhere from 15 to 50 days
- person is infectious two weeks before displaying symptoms and one week after becoming jaundice
- illness can last 1 to 2 weeks, but can continue for several months

Prevention

- HAV vaccine.
- Wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly before preparing and eating food.
- Avoid sharing food, cutlery, or drinks with other people.
- Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly under running water.
- Keep kitchen and equipment clean.

INTOXICATION

Foodborne intoxication is caused by eating food containing toxins. These toxins are produced by the bacteria in the contaminated food. Food poisoning triggers illness after being ingested and vomiting and diarrhea usually occur as the toxins affect the cells lining the intestinal wall.

Some bacteria or parasites are present in or on the human body and can be transferred to other human beings through various means, including through food.



SOME COMMON BACTERIA CAUSING INTOXICATION ARE:

STAPHYLOCOCCUS AUREUS

Staphylococcus aureus, also known as 'Golden Staph', is a bacteria which lives in infected wounds, on the skin, in the nose and in water and soil. If someone is infected with this bacteria they may transfer it to food, causing the person to consume the food to become ill.



High-risk foods

- animals and poultry carrying this bacterium, therefore all raw meat and poultry products should be handled with care
- unpasteurised milk and milk products, including cheese

Symptoms

- nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps and diarrhoea
- onset is rapid, usually within 1 to 6 hours

Prevention

- Cook food thoroughly and serve immediately or at least 60 degrees or hotter before serving.
- Cool food quickly if to be consumed later - place in fridge/freezer as soon as steaming stops.

- Keep leftovers in fridge or freezer and dispose of refrigerated leftovers within 3-4 days (1 day for vulnerable people).
- Wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly before preparing and eating food.
- Keep kitchen and equipment clean.
- Not handling food if you have a nose, eye, or skin infection.

TOXOPLASMA GONDII

Toxoplasma is a parasite that causes toxoplasmosis which is a disease that can result in serious health problems in individuals who are at high risk for food poisoning, including pregnant women, infants, older adults and people with weakened immune systems.



High-risk foods

- handling or eating of raw/undercooked meat
- dirty hands from gardening
- contact with unwashed fruit or vegetables
- contact with cat faeces in the soil or cat litter
- contaminated water

Symptoms

- flu-like symptoms, swollen glands, headaches, fatigue, muscle pain
- blurry vision, red, sore, or watering eyes
- in serious cases, can affect brain and other organs
- can last months

Prevention

- Wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly before preparing and eating food.
- Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly under running water.
- Cook meat and ready meals thoroughly.
- Wear gloves when gardening and wash hands afterwards.
- Avoid cat faeces and wear gloves when handling kitty litter.

FOOD HANDLERS

A food handler is anyone who works in a business which serves food and handles food or surfaces that are likely to come into contact with food items such as cutlery and plates. They may be involved in food preparation such as chopping, cooking, cooling, packing, transporting, food service, or cleaning the premises and equipment.

A food handler is responsible for understanding how to keep food safe to eat, including having the necessary skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene and ensuring they don't contaminate food through illness or unhygienic practices.

CLEANLINESS

Cleanliness and good hygiene are simple yet effective methods to ensure food standards are met. Food handlers should always ensure they:

- › Wash hands with soap and dry them thoroughly.
- › Utilise sanitiser unless hands are visibly soiled.
- › Stop hair, clothes, jewellery or personal belongings such as phones from touching food or surfaces; hair should be tied back, loose jewellery removed, and open sores covered up.
- › Do not touch ready-to-eat food with your bare hands – use clean tongs or gloves.
- › Wear clean clothing and aprons.
- › Do not eat, spit, smoke, sneeze, blow, or cough over food or surfaces that food touches.

It is important you tell your supervisor if you think you are sick or have contaminated food in any way.

HAND WASHING

Being thorough when washing your hands is very important. The following steps are advised to ensure it is done correctly:

- › Only use the sink provided just for hand washing.
- › Wet hands under warm running water.
- › Lather hands with soap, thoroughly scrub fingers, palms, wrists, back of hands and under nails for at least 15 seconds.
- › Rinse hands under warm running water.
- › Thoroughly dry hands with a single-use towel or hand dryer machine.



You must always wash your hands:

- › Before you start handling food or go back to handling food after other tasks.
- › Before working with ready-to-eat food after handling raw food.
- › After using the toilet.
- › After smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or tissue, eating, or drinking.
- › After touching your hair, scalp, nose.
- › After doing anything else that could make your hands dirty, like handling garbage, touching animals or children, or cleaning duties.

USE OF GLOVES

The Food Standards Code does not require food handlers to use gloves. Even when wearing gloves, in many situations it may be preferable to use utensils such as tongs or spoons. Remember, gloves are no replacement for maintaining hand hygiene.

Gloves must be removed, discarded, and replaced with a new pair in the below circumstances:

- › Before handling food.
- › After handling raw food.
- › After using the toilet, smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief, eating, drinking, or touching the hair, scalp or body.



IF YOU'RE SICK

Some illnesses can be passed to people through food. These are foodborne illnesses such as gastroenteritis (often known as gastro) and hepatitis A.

If you know or think you have a foodborne illness, for example if you have diarrhoea or fever, you must:

- tell your supervisor
- stop handling food as it's likely to become contaminated
- only return to food handling when a doctor says you're well enough, usually 48 hours after symptoms stop

FOOD SAFETY TEMPERATURE ZONE

An important part of food safety is food temperature and storage. Bacteria can grow on food that isn't kept at the correct temperature.

Temperature 'danger zone'

The ideal temperature zone for bacteria to multiply in high-risk food is known as the temperature 'danger zone.' When handling food, always ensure high risk food is in the temperature danger zone for as short a time as possible.

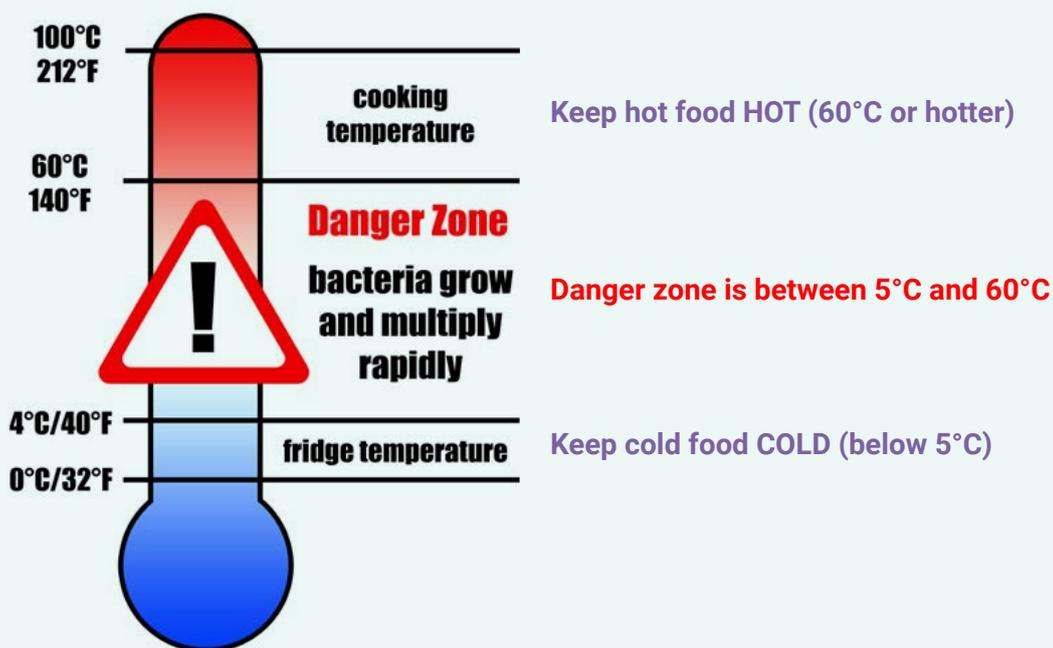
2-hour/4-hour rule

High risk foods which have been kept between 5°C and 60°C for a total of:

- < 2 hours must be refrigerated or used immediately.
- >2 hours but < 4 hours must be used immediately or thrown out.
- For a total of 4 hours or longer, must be thrown out.

The following is a helpful guide on expected fridge life for foods and their correct temperature once cooked.

Temperature 'Danger Zone'



Food Safety Guide

healthdirect
www.healthdirect.gov.au

Food	Expected fridge life (below 5°C)* when uncooked	Cooking temperature**	Cooking tips
Poultry (chicken, turkey, duck) 	3 days	75°C	Cook right through to the centre.
Red meat steaks (beef, veal, lamb) 	3 to 5 days	63°C rare 71°C medium 77°C well done	Steak need only be seared on the outside and can be rare inside.
Mince, sausages & other processed meats 	3 days	75°C	Cook right through to the centre.
Fish 	3 days	69°C	Cook until flesh is opaque (so you can't see through it) and separates easily with a fork.
Pork 	3 days	70°C	Can be cooked like red meat.
Seafood (shellfish) 	2 days	63°C	Cook until flesh is pearly and opaque or until shells open during cooking.
Eggs 	3-6 weeks	72°C	Cook until yolk and white are firm.

Any leftovers should be reheated to 75° in the centre.

* Many of these products are labelled with a 'use-by' date. This can be used as a guide to the fridge life of the unopened product.

** Use a food thermometer to measure cooking temperatures.

'Best before' and 'Use-by' dates

Date marks on food labels

Food labels have date marks to tell us about safe shelf life. These marks help us tell how long food can be kept before it begins to deteriorate. All food with a shelf life of less than 2 years must be date marked.

'Use by': foods must be eaten or thrown away by the date



- after this date foods may be unsafe to eat even if they look fine, because the nutrients in the food may become unstable or a build-up of bacteria may occur
- it is illegal to sell foods after a 'use by' date
- common 'use by' foods include milk, sliced ham, and shaved meats

Best before': foods are still safe to eat after the date if they are not damaged, deteriorated or perished



- the 'best before' date simply indicates that the product may lose some of its quality after this date passes
- foods can be legally sold after a 'best before' date if they are not damaged, deteriorated or perished
- you can expect these foods to retain their colour, taste, texture, and flavour if they are stored correctly
- common 'best before' foods include canned foods, cereals, biscuits, sauces, chocolate, sugar, flour, and frozen foods

REFRIGERATORS AND FREEZERS

Refrigerators and freezers primarily prevent food-borne illnesses, slow down food spoilage and loss of food quality. This is only if they are operating at the correct temperature. Bacteria is less likely to grow at low temperatures, provided food is stored in the correct manner.

The optimum temperature for home fridges is between 0°C and 5°C.

Frozen food should be kept below - 18°C.



Temperature data loggers

These are devices which record temperatures at regular intervals. The recordings can later be downloaded onto a computer for analysis. Maintaining the optimum temperature inside a fridge is important to minimise the growth of bacteria that can cause food poisoning and spoilage.



RECEIVING FOOD PRODUCTS

- Check invoices, labels or tags to confirm food is from approved sources.

What to look for when receiving supplier goods?

Measure the temperature of foods to ensure the chain is maintained for both hot and cold foods. If you are unsure of the temperature check your policy.

Check boxes, carton or containers are in a good condition and not leaking. Look for evidence of pests.

Check cans received are not:

- severely dented on the side seam or top or bottom rim
- swollen or bulging
- rusted with pitted surfaces

Evaluate the condition and cleanliness of the delivery vehicle.

CLEANING AND SHOPPING

Cleaning a fridge, which would mean the door was open for a long time, can also cause the inside temperature to rise to unsafe levels. It is a good idea to clean the fridge when it is at its most empty, such as before shopping or re-stocking. The task should be performed quickly and efficiently to limit the time the fridge is open.

When shopping, buy the cold food last, transport it in a cooler bag and get it home or to the workplace and into the fridge quickly, so it's as cold as possible when it goes into fridge. After loading the shopping, keep the door closed for several hours to give the fridge time to recover its temperature.

Some more tips for keeping the temperature of the fridge stable are:

- Close the door quickly each time removing or placing food in the fridge.
- Avoid overloading the fridge, as this reduces air flow inside and the fridge must work much harder to keep the correct temperature.
- Check the fridge temperature is at 5°C or below. Fridge thermometers can be bought from fridge retailers, kitchenware stores and hardware stores.
- Ensure the fridge is well-insulated, with door seals in good condition.



THAWING OF FOOD

There are four safe ways to thaw food. Thawing food is also known as 'defrosting'. Food must never be thawed on workbenches or other surfaces.

In the fridge

This is the safest method of thawing food, as food does not need to pass through the temperature danger zone. When thawing food, ensure the temperature in the fridge remains at 5°C or lower, and that the food items are placed on the lowest shelves to prevent dripping or splashing onto other items.

It can take quite a long time to thaw food in a fridge. Large items, such as frozen turkeys, can take several days to defrost, as you need to allow at least 24 hours for every 2.5kg. Even small items will take at least a full day to defrost.



In the microwave

Microwaves are handy for thawing small food items quickly, however it is important to ensure heat is distributed evenly through the food by stirring the item regularly throughout the process.

This process is only recommended for food which is about to be cooked immediately.



As part of the cooking process

Some foods such as frozen chicken nuggets, frozen vegetables and frozen pastry are designed to be cooked from frozen. It is important to follow directions on the packaging, and if the packaging does not specify this method, then this process shouldn't be followed.

The internal temperature of the food should be checked before serving.



Under running water

This method is the least preferred way of thawing food, as the temperature of the food can reach the danger zone quickly. If this method must be used, a clean and sanitised sink must be used, and the food completely submerged under the running water at 20°C or lower. The food must be in leak-proof and waterproof packaging.

The sink must be large enough to allow the food to be completely covered, with the process completed in less than 2 hours. The sink must be cleaned and sanitised after this method.



PREPARING FOOD TO AVOID FOOD POISONING

- Wash your hands in warm, soapy water before preparing food.
- Don't use the same cutting board for raw food that will be used for cooked (meat) and foods that are served raw (such as salads). This reduces the chances of cross contamination of food.



STORING FOOD TO AVOID FOOD POISONING

- Separate raw food from cooked food and store raw food at the bottom of the fridge to avoid juices dripping onto and contaminating other food.
- Check your fridge temperature is below 5 °C and your freezer temperature is below -18 °C.
- Allow cooked foods to cool to room temperature (about 21 °C) before storing in the refrigerator. (This should not take more than two hours – cooling will be quicker if you put the hot food into several smaller containers, rather than leaving it in one large one.)
- Cover all food with lids, tin foil, or plastic wrap.
- Don't store food in opened tin cans.



COOKING FOOD SAFELY

- Preheat equipment such as ovens and grills before cooking. Food may not be cooked right through to the centre if you use equipment before it is preheated.
- Cook whole cuts of meat (e.g., roast beef, roast pork, rolled roasts) until juices run clear when a skewer is inserted into the middle. Some cuts of meat (e.g., lamb cutlets, steak) are still safe if they are slightly pink in the centre, so long as all surfaces are fully cooked.
- Minced meat must always be cooked properly. The leading cause of E.Coli bacteria in food is minced meat therefore ground beef/minced meat and its products such as burgers and meatballs should never be served raw or undercooked.
- Turn foods during cooking to help it cook more evenly.
- Boil or simmer liquid dishes until they are bubbling rapidly and steaming. Look for these signs so you can be sure the dish is hot enough to destroy harmful bacteria.
- Stir liquid dishes frequently to make sure food is the same temperature all the way through with no cold spots.
- Keep cooked foods separate from raw foods to prevent harmful bacteria from spreading to the cooked food and making it unsafe to eat.



COOLING FOOD SAFELY

- Avoid cooking large quantities of food in advance. Large quantities of food are more difficult to cool quickly. Slower cooling times increase the risk of harmful bacteria growing.
- Stand cooked food until it stops steaming (20-30 mins) using the methods below, then refrigerate promptly.
- Cool liquid foods more rapidly by stirring occasionally to help release steam.
- A small pot can be rapidly cooled by placing it in a sink with just enough cold water to come halfway up the side.
- Divide food into small portions in clean, shallow containers, ideally around 5cm deep so they cool down quicker.
- Keep food covered during cooling to protect it from contamination.

- Label containers with the name and date it was made, to assist with stock control.
- If food has been contaminated during cooling, throw it away.
- Leave space around food containers cooling in the fridge (do not stack) to allow cold air to flow freely around the food.
- Fridges should not be overcrowded.
- Cooked food that has been cooled should be stored in a refrigerator for no longer than 48 hours.
- Food intended to be frozen should be rapidly cooled first and then be placed in a freezer within 48 hours of cooling.



REHEATING FOOD SAFELY

- Preheat equipment such as ovens and grills before reheating. Food may not be heated through to the centre if equipment is used before it is preheated.
- Stir or turn food during reheating to make sure it heats evenly.
- When heating food purchased from a supplier, follow their reheating instructions.
- When using a microwave to reheat food, stir while reheating until steaming hot in the centre, and let stand before serving.
- Do not add raw food, or mix in new batches of food, into already reheated food as this can spread harmful bacteria through the reheated food.
- Always use clean equipment and utensils to handle reheated food.
- Reheat once only.
- Do not return reheated food to the fridge or freezer.
- Throw away any leftover reheated food that has not been eaten or served.
- Reheating and cooling food more than once will increase the risk of bacteria growing as food spends a longer time in the temperature danger zone.



HOW TO PUREE FOOD SAFELY

- Keep cooked pureed food separate from raw foods to avoid cross contamination. Use a separate processing area away from raw meats, fruit, and vegetables.
- Make sure the blender/vitamiser/Bamix™ is clean, sanitised, and undamaged before use.
- After every use, take the blender apart. Clean, sanitise and dry each individual part thoroughly, then put it back together.
- Ideally, puree foods just before serving. Plan carefully to make sure there is no delay between cooking, pureeing, and serving as this allows sufficient time for bacteria to grow.
- Throw away any leftover pureed food at the end of the day.
- Pureed food should reach a core temperature of 75°C or more during cooking or reheating.



PERSONAL HYGIENE AND ILLNESS

It is important all staff that handle food follow good personal health and hygiene practices so as not to compromise the safety and suitability of food. Food handlers should be trained in the following practices and supervisors should regularly check these standards are observed.

HAND WASHING

Food handlers should wash their hands before preparing or handling food and after using the toilet, changing incontinence aids, smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or tissue, eating or drinking. When washing their hands, food handlers should use the hand washing facilities provided, use soap and warm running water, and thoroughly dry their hands on a single use towel.



CLOTHING

Food handlers should wear clean outer clothing when preparing food. An apron that is easily cleaned or disposable over their clothes is recommended, especially when working with raw meat, poultry, or eggs. Food handlers should remove aprons when performing any other duty that does not involve food. Wearing gloves is not a requirement, however, they are useful for covering Band-Aids and for handling some messy foods.

The use of gloves should not replace hand washing between activities. Where gloves are used, keep them clean and intact and change them whenever they might have become contaminated.



HAIR

Food handlers should tie back or cover their hair when preparing or serving food to prevent it from falling into food.



PERSONAL EFFECTS

When preparing food, food handlers should not wear watches or loose jewellery, especially on hands and wrists, except for a plain wedding band. Food handlers should keep fingernails short and clean and not wear artificial fingernails. Personal belongings such as handbags, mobile phones and outdoor coats that are not needed for food handling, should be stored in allocated storage areas.



COUGHING AND SNEEZING

Food handlers should not eat, sneeze, blow or cough over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food.



INJURY

Cuts and sores on exposed body parts such as hands should be covered with a bandage or Band-Aid that is then completely covered with a waterproof covering such as a glove when preparing food.

Blue bandaids are the standard in the food industry because you can see it if it comes off an injured finger!

**ILLNESS**

Food handlers should not prepare food if they have diarrhoea, are vomiting, or have other symptoms of illness such as fever, sore throat with fever, nausea, jaundice, or abdominal cramps. Staff members should advise the director if they have these symptoms.

**CLEANING AND SANITATION**

Bacteria and other contaminating substances can easily be transferred between food handlers, equipment, food, and surfaces, so regular cleaning and sanitisation of food preparation areas is an important aspect of food safety. These should be recorded on a checklist daily.

There is a difference between cleaning and sanitising.

- **cleaning** is the process of using detergent and water to remove visible dust, grease, dirt, stains and odours from all surfaces, fixtures (benches and sinks), utensils and equipment
- **sanitising** is the process of killing food poisoning bacteria (what you cannot see) and is achieved by using heat and/or chemicals

DAILY CLEANING

- › Clear and clean work surfaces and equipment as you go, to prevent the spread of bacteria.
- › Wipe up spills as soon as they happen.
- › Wash work surfaces and equipment thoroughly between tasks to prevent dirt and bacteria spreading onto other foods.
- › Remove all solids and scraps from equipment, bench tops and floors, and place into the garbage bin.
- › Wash equipment and utensils with hot water and detergent until clean, and rinse with clean water to remove any residues. Leave equipment to air dry or dry by hand.
- › Use dishwashers on the hottest cycle with an appropriate detergent, and clean regularly.
- › Wipe clean and sanitise bench tops.
- › Sweep and mop floors clean with a detergent solution and allowed to air dry.
- › Keep bins clean and stored properly so they do not attract pests or cause odours.
- › Clean and sanitise aprons, tea towels and reusable cloths.
- › Keep toilet and hand washing facilities in a clean and sanitary condition.



SANITISING

Sanitising chemicals are used after cleaning and remain on equipment and surfaces to provide a barrier between surfaces and bacteria.

When using a sanitising chemical, it is important to first make sure that it is safe to be used around food. Commercial food kitchens are encouraged to sanitise surfaces, utensils, and food equipment either after each use or at least every four hours.

HEAT SANITISING

Heat sanitising refers to equipment which is heated to at least 77°C either in a commercial dishwasher or in a sink filled with hot water. However, as washing equipment in a sink with water this hot is dangerous, using a dishwasher is a safer option. It is important that all equipment is first properly washed before sanitising. This is because sanitising alone does not guarantee that all bacteria is destroyed.



The following items should be sanitised after cleaning:

- pots and pans
- containers
- chopping boards
- utensils
- benches
- knives
- sinks
- bain-maries
- crockery and cutlery
- refrigerators
- rice cookers
- thermometers
- meat slicers
- glasses and cups
- food storage

PAPER TOWELS

Use single use disposable paper towels where possible, especially for drying hands and wiping up spills on the floor. These should be thrown away immediately after each task to minimise bacteria spreading.



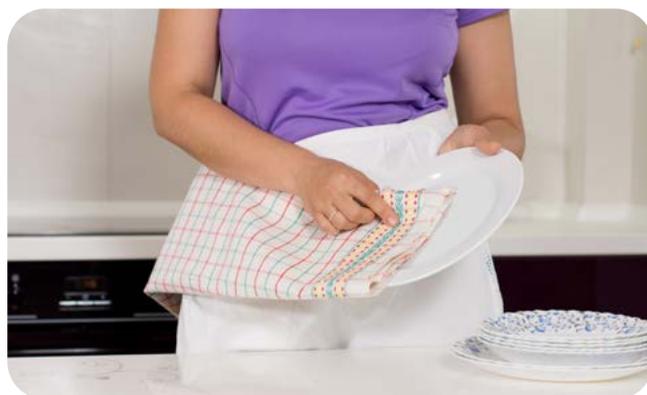
DISH CLOTHS

Replace cloths or sanitise them daily. It is recommended that cloths are sanitised overnight each day, then replaced weekly. Colour coded cloths can also be used for different activities in the kitchen (e.g., blue for sink, red for benches, green for floor).



TEA TOWELS AND OVEN MITTS

If dishes are dried by hand, use only clean tea towels designated for that specific purpose. They should not be used to mopping up spills or drying hands. If oven mitts are used, clean and sanitise them regularly.



MAINTENANCE OF KITCHEN AND EQUIPMENT

KITCHEN

The kitchen must be designed, constructed, and maintained in a way that minimises the risk of food becoming contaminated. Any maintenance issues and construction defects that are identified during routine daily checks and twelve-monthly inspections must be documented on the appropriate record forms. If structural damage such as damp/chipped plaster, broken tiles, holes in walls or windows is noted, it must be repaired as soon as possible. Extractor fans and filters must be checked regularly to ensure they are working properly and are free from grease and dirt.

EQUIPMENT

Food preparation equipment such as fridges, freezers, stoves, and ovens must be kept clean and in good working order. If servicing of such equipment is required, copies of the reports should be maintained. Any chipped, broken, or cracked eating or drinking utensils should be thrown away immediately, and repair or replace any equipment or utensils that are damaged or have loose parts.

CHEMICAL STORAGE

Correct storage of chemicals and adhering to correct handling practices is important to ensure no chemical contamination occurs. The following recommendations help prevent chemical contamination:

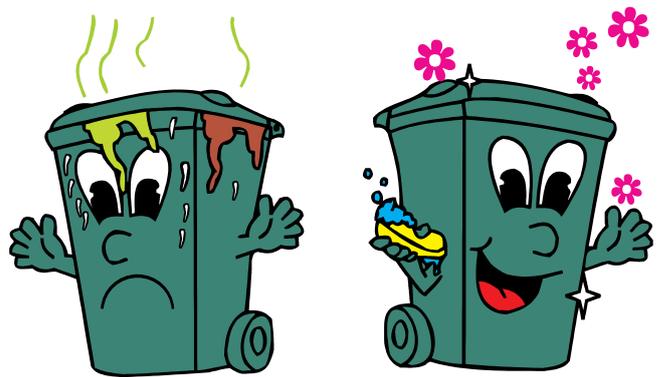
- Chemicals should be stored separately from food products and packaging materials.
- Thoroughly rinse cleaning products and sanitisers from equipment during clean-up.
- Only approved chemicals should be used during cleaning and sanitising.
- Pest control should be performed only by professionals.
- Regular reviews of current procedures and adequate employee training and in-house testing should occur.
- Follow organisational policies and procedures.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Correct waste management in food premises aids in the prevention of several food safety issues which can arise. Waste management is a vital area of food safety control.

Food waste will attract pests or vermin, which in turn will encourage pests to look for more food within the premises. This can quickly become a pest infestation and harmful bacteria can spread. It is necessary to have a frequent waste collection service.

Waste should be discarded regularly, but it is also important that waste bins and bin areas are included in the regular cleaning schedule to maintain correct hygiene standards.



SUMMARY

Australia has a safe, reliable, and healthy food supply; however, cases of food poisoning still occur. It is estimated that more than 5 million cases of food poisoning are reported in Australia each year, both through businesses and at home.

The Australian and New Zealand Food Standards outline the correct procedures for handling, storing, and serving food. This is to help in the prevention of food-related illnesses.

Food safety hazards may cause harm or adverse effects when contaminated food is eaten and can occur in the production and/or service of food. The three hazards are:

- biological
- chemical
- physical

Food poisoning is the name for the range of illnesses caused by eating or drinking contaminated food or drink. Food poisoning is usually caused by any of the following three types of pathogens:

- bacterial
- viral
- intoxication

Most of these pathogens can be destroyed or their numbers kept minimal by correct food handling and adhering to high standards of food safety.

A food handler is anyone who works in a business which serves food and handles food or surfaces that are likely to come into contact with food items such as cutlery and plates. They are responsible for understanding how to keep food safe to eat, including having the necessary skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene and ensuring they don't contaminate food through illness or unhygienic practices.

The food safety temperature zone is an important part of food safety. Bacteria can grow on food that isn't kept at the correct temperature. The temperature 'danger zone' is when bacteria multiplies in high-risk food.

Refrigerators and freezers primarily prevent food-borne illnesses, slow down food spoilage and loss of food quality. This is only if they are operating at the correct temperature. Bacteria is less likely to grow at low temperatures, provided food is stored in the correct manner. Cleaning of fridges should be performed quickly and efficiently to limit the time the fridge is open.

Thawing food is also known as 'defrosting'. Food must never be thawed on workbenches or other surfaces. There are four safe ways to defrost food:

- › In the fridge.
- › In the microwave.
- › As part of the cooking process.
- › Under running water.

There are several considerations food handlers need to take to prevent food poisoning. These include:

- correct hand washing techniques
- correct use of gloves
- the need to report symptoms of illness and not resume work until 48 hours after symptoms have ceased
- safe preparation of food
- safe storing of food
- safe cooking of food
- safe cooling of food
- safe pureeing of food
- safe reheating of food

The personal hygiene of the food handler is important, as is the regular cleaning and sanitisation of areas food is prepared and all utensils and equipment which comes in contact with food. These food safety considerations will significantly reduce the incidence of food-related illness.

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