

3. At home:

a. Storage:

- **Put perishable foods away first – immediately.** Assuming that the store wrap on meat and poultry is clean and not torn, it's best to leave a product in its original packaging to keep from introducing bacteria. For long-term freezer storage, over-wrap store packaging with clean plastic or aluminum foil for added protection from freezer burn.
- **Store raw meats on lower shelf and prevent the leaking of juices on cooked product and produce.**
- **Handle perishable food quickly and get it into the oven or the refrigerator as soon as possible.**
- **Don't stack foods – the cold air needs to reach the center to chill them fast!**
- **Wash hands before and after handling raw meat and poultry.**

b. Preparation

- **Be sure all work surfaces and utensils are clean before preparing food.** Bacteria can be present on any surface or food, as well as on people's hands. To sanitize cutting boards, counters, and sinks, first wash with hot, soapy water. Make a solution of one tablespoon of chlorine bleach to a gallon of water and let solution stay on surfaces for a few minutes. Rinse with clear water, air dry or pat dry with a clean paper towel.
- **Wash hands before and after preparing foods.**
- **Marinate meat and poultry in a covered dish in the refrigerator unless cooking them within the hour.**
- **Never partially cook food to finish later.**
- **Wash all fresh vegetables and fruits thoroughly under cold running water. Scrub produce when possible.**

c. Cooking:

- **Cook ground meats to 160⁰ F; or until brown in the middle with no pink juices.**
- **Beef, veal and lamb steaks, roasts and chops may be cooked to 145⁰ F.**
- **All cuts of pork should be cooked to 160⁰ F.**
- **Whole poultry and thighs should reach 180⁰ F; breasts, 170⁰ F; juices should be clear; meat, not pink.**
- **Read and follow all directions for cooking/heating/microwaving packaged foods such as TV dinners, pot pies, casseroles, etc.**
- **Keep hot foods hot (above 140⁰ F)!**

d. Leftovers:

- **Divide foods into small shallow containers to help foods cool quicker.**
- **Put food directly in the refrigerator or freezer.**
- **Never refrigerate one large pot of food or a whole turkey.**
- **Do not leave foods out.** Food such as potato salad and pasta salads will reach the "Danger Zone" before you know it. Use coolers and plenty of ice.

ALWAYS KEEP COLD FOODS COLD AND HOT FOODS HOT!

For more information on safe food handling:

USDA Meat and Poultry Hot line – (888) 674-6854

mph hotline.fsis@usda.gov

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/Ask_Karen/index.asp#Question

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/for_kids_&_teens/index.asp

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/list.html>

http://www.cdc.gov/health/old%20AZ%20files/old_foodill.htm

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