



FOOD SAFETY FOR MEAT, POULTRY, AND SEAFOOD

Meat, poultry, and seafood are great sources of protein and vitamins. Handle them properly to prevent food-borne illness!

Cook It Right

- ✗ Cook ground meat to at least 160 °F. Ground poultry should be cooked to 165 °F.
- ✗ Cook roasts and steaks to an internal temperature of at least 145 °F for medium rare or 160 °F for medium.
- ✗ Whole poultry should be cooked to 165 °F — measure the temperature in the thigh.
- ✗ Cook fish until it is opaque (not clear) and flakes easily with a fork.

Combat Cross-Contamination!

- ✗ To prevent raw juices from contaminating ready-to-eat foods, separate raw meat, poultry, and seafood from other foods in your grocery store shopping cart and in your refrigerator.
- ✗ Consider using one cutting board for raw meat, poultry, and seafood products and another one for fresh fruits and vegetables. In addition, don't forget to wash your hands with soap and warm water and your cutting boards, dishes, and utensils with hot, soapy water after they come in contact with raw meat, poultry, and seafood.
- ✗ Place cooked food on a clean platter. If you put cooked food on an unwashed platter that previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood, bacteria from the raw food could contaminate the safely cooked food.
- ✗ To prevent juices from raw meat, poultry, or seafood from dripping onto other foods in your refrigerator, place these raw foods in sealed containers, plastic bags, or on a plate or tray. Then store them on the bottom shelf so they won't drip onto foods below them.
- ✗ Don't use or taste sauce that was used to marinate raw meat, poultry, or seafood on cooked foods unless you boil it first.
- ✗ Use a clean food thermometer to make sure raw meat and poultry have been cooked to a safe internal temperature. Wash the food thermometer in hot, soapy water between uses.

Q: Should I wash raw meat, poultry, or seafood before cooking it?

A: Washing raw poultry, beef, pork, lamb, veal, or seafood before cooking is not necessary. Although washing these raw foods may get rid of some of the pathogens on the surface of these foods, it may allow the pathogens to spread around the kitchen. Cooking these foods to a safe internal temperature will destroy any bacteria that may be present in the food. Use a clean food thermometer to make sure food has reached the proper temperature.

Q: If cooked meat and poultry look pink, does it mean that the food is not done?

A: The color of cooked meat and poultry is not a sure sign of its degree of doneness. For instance, hamburgers and fresh pork can remain pink even after cooking to temperatures of 160°F or higher. Smoked poultry remains pink no matter how cooked it is. Only by using a food thermometer can you really tell that meat and poultry have reached safe internal temperatures. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention does not recommend eating undercooked or raw meat, poultry, and seafood because they may cause food-borne illness.

Safe-Cooking Temperature Chart

Beef/Pork

- ✗ Cook beef roasts and steaks to 145 °F for medium rare or to 160 °F for medium.
- ✗ Cook ground beef to at least 160 °F.
- ✗ Cook raw sausages to 160 °F.
- ✗ Reheat ready-to-eat sausages to 165 °F.
- ✗ Cook pork roasts, chops, or ground patties to 160 °F for medium or to 170 °F for well done.

Poultry

- ✗ Cook whole poultry to 165 °F.
- ✗ Cook ground poultry to 165 °F.
- ✗ Cook stuffing to 165 °F.

Eggs

- ✗ Cook eggs until the yolks and whites are firm.
- ✗ Don't use recipes in which eggs remain raw or only partially cooked.



Fish

- ✗ Cook fish until it is opaque (not clear) and flakes easily with a fork.
- ✗ Avoid eating raw oysters or raw shellfish.

People with liver disorders or weakened immune systems are especially at risk for getting sick from improperly cooked fish.

Leftovers

- ✗ When reheating leftovers, heat them thoroughly to at least 165 °F.

Source: Partnership for Food Safety Education, 655 15th St., NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20005

- www.befoodsafe.org
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture www.fsis.usda.gov
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) www.cfsan.fda.gov



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