



FOOD SAFETY DURING CANCER TREATMENT

Your cancer and the type of treatment you receive may weaken your immune system. Choosing and preparing safe foods can help protect you from foodborne illness. A diet rich in fruit, vegetables, grains, beans, lean meat, fish and low fat dairy are important to consume to help maintain your strength and immune system. These guidelines can help make sure your foods are safe.

CLEANING

- Proper hand washing is the first important step for food safety.
- Wash with warm soapy water for 20 seconds before and after handling food. Wash after touching pets, handling garbage and using the restroom.
- Use only clean towels, sponges or paper towels to clean work surfaces, utensils and cutting boards and re-wash when switching between different foods. For example, after chopping vegetables and slicing chicken breast.
- Thoroughly rinse fresh fruit and vegetables under running water while scrubbing or brushing to remove excess dirt. Even melon, oranges and other thick skinned fruit that are peeled before eating should be washed to avoid introducing bacteria into the fruit when cutting.

SEPARATING FOOD

- It is especially important to prevent the juices from raw meat, poultry and fish from coming in contact with other foods.
- Place all fresh meat and fish in plastic bags at the grocery store and in the refrigerator before use.
- Use separate cutting boards for meat and produce.
- Use clean dishes to serve cooked food. Never reuse a dish that has held raw meat or fish without properly cleaning with soap and warm water.
- Avoid purchasing or eating from dented cans and foods with broken seals.

COOKING

- A food thermometer can be useful to ensure food is cooked to a safe temperature. See chart on the following page for recommended internal cooking temperatures.
- Whole or ground meats as well as mixed dishes such as casseroles should reach a safe internal temperature. Do not rely on the color of the meat for doneness.
- Eggs need to be cooked until the yolk and white is firm and not runny. Avoid recipes that call for uncooked eggs such as in many cream desserts, raw cookie dough or cake batter, hollandaise sauce, or caesar dressings.
- Bring leftover sauces, soups and gravies to a boil.



FOOD STORAGE

- Avoid keeping food in the danger zone where bacteria grows the best between 40 °F and 140 °F.
- Check that your refrigerator is at 40 °F or below.
- Place fresh or left over food in the refrigerator within 2 hours of purchase or eating.
- Refrigerate or freeze food immediately after purchase.
- Defrost food in the refrigerator, in cold water or by microwaving followed by immediate cooking.
- Use shallow pans or dishes to cool food before refrigerating to avoid increasing the refrigerator temperature.

GENERAL FOOD SAFETY TIPS

- Avoid salad bars, buffets and potlucks to reduce your risk of foodborne illness.
- Avoid unpasteurized dairy products such as unpasteurized milk, cheeses, egg nog and unpasteurized honey, juices and ciders.
- Read 'Use By' and expiration dates on fresh and packaged foods.
- Avoid consuming raw sprouts of any kind (including alfalfa, clover, radish, and mung bean sprouts).
- **No raw or undercooked eggs, meat, fish or shellfish.**

POLICY ON FOOD BROUGHT IN FROM HOME OR TAKEOUT

- Avoid store delis and self-serve or buffet style restaurants. Food made to order from restaurants is a safer choice.
- Food cooked at home is allowed if storage and reheating guidelines are followed. Do not consume leftovers older than 48 hours.

For more information ask to speak with a registered dietitian.



SAFE COOKING TEMPERATURES

Use a thermometer to check the internal temperature of food near the end of cooking. The most accurate temperature is taken in the middle or core of the food or fluid.

Meat and Meat Mixtures

Beef, Pork, Veal, Lamb 160 °F

Turkey, Chicken 165 °F

Fresh Beef, Veal, Lamb

Medium Rare 145 °F

Medium 160 °F

Well Done 170 °F

Poultry

Chicken and Turkey, Whole 165 °F

Poultry Parts 165 °F

Duck and Goose 165 °F

Stuffing (cooked alone or in bird) 165 °F

Fresh Pork

Medium 160 °F

Well Done 170 °F

Ham

Fresh 160 °F

Pre-cooked 140 °F

Eggs and Egg Dishes

Eggs Cooked until white and yolk are firm.

Egg Dishes such as Omelet, Quiche, Frittata or Soufflé 160 °F

Seafood

Fin Fish such as Salmon, Halibut, Tuna, Mahi-mahi, Catfish 145 °F Flesh is opaque.

Shrimp, Lobster, Crab Flesh is pearly and opaque.

Clams, Oysters, Mussels Shells open during cooking. Discard any unopened shells.

Scallops Milky white color or opaque and firm.

Leftovers and Casseroles 165 °F