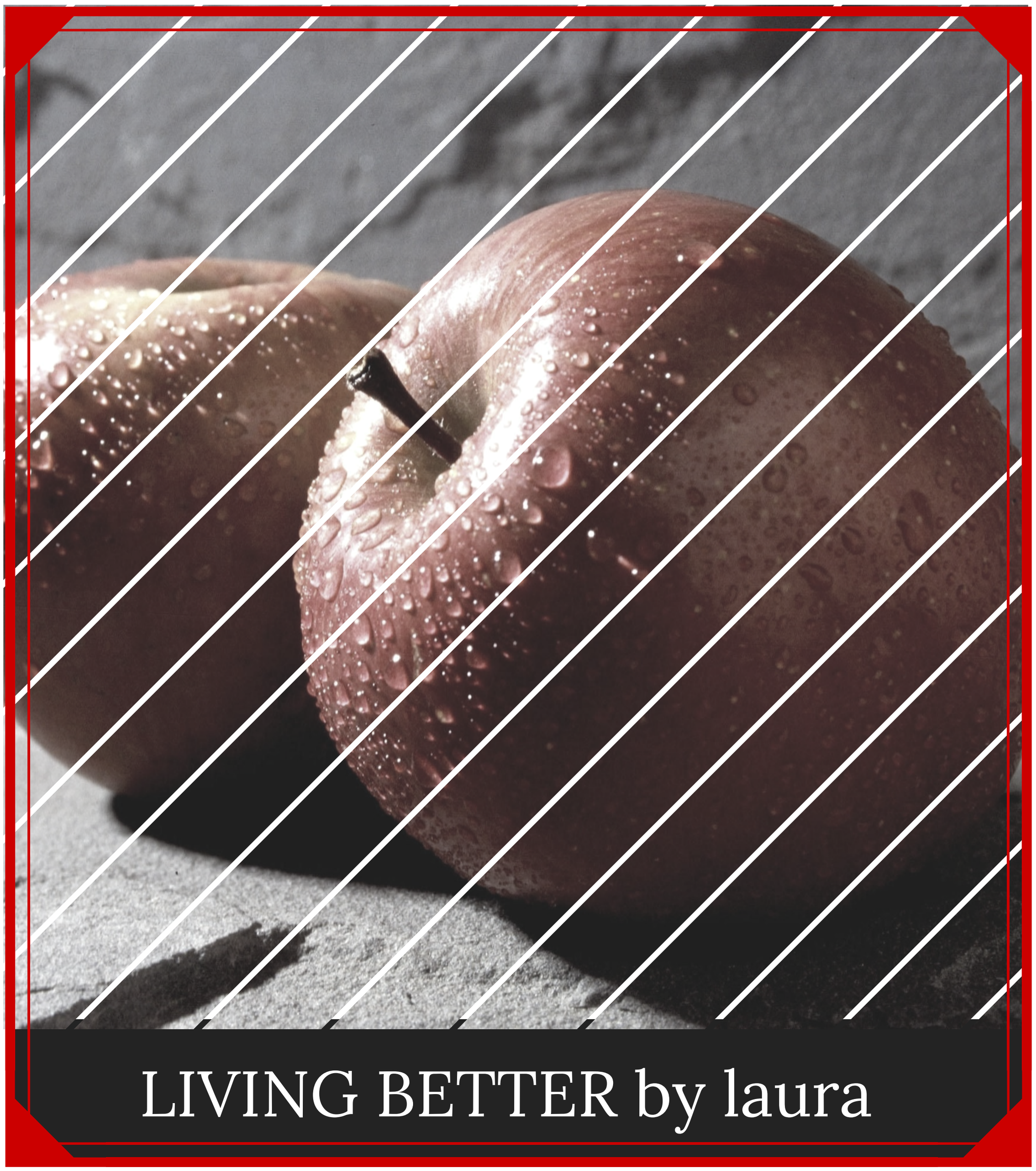
Home Food Safety Guide

HEALTHY WAYS TO COOK, EAT AND STORE FOOD &

EASY MEANS TO PREVENT FOODBORNE ILLNESS AT HOME



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Welcome to the Home Food Safety Guide

LIVING BETTER by laura brings you healthy ways to cook, eat and store food. This overview will help you practice food safety at home. Follow these guidelines and your food will taste better, be more nutritious and much less likely to cause food borne illnesses.

Getting a foodborne illness is a miserable experience. And, for certain people, it can be a life-threatening infection. Young children, people with chronic illnesses, pregnant women and those with a poor immune system are at high risk whenever they get sick.

Eating contaminated food can bring on symptoms such as vomiting, nausea, abdominal cramps and diarrhea. It can lead to dehydration and worse - bloodstream infections, kidney failure, nervous system damage or death. Millions get sick and thousands die each year from contaminated food or liquids in the United States alone.

The fact is that foodborne illnesses are entirely preventable.

The bad bugs, that spoil food, can be either bacteria, viruses, or toxic chemicals. They enter the human body when we eat or drink food that has gone bad. The pathogens or microbes in the food enter the gastrointestinal system through the mouth and pass to the stomach, intestines and sometimes the bloodstream.

These pathogens can get to us because they can grow, under the right conditions, in food. These tiny germs are very sneaky. You cannot see, smell or taste contaminated food in the beginning phases of spoiling.

Most foodborne illnesses come from animal sources - raw shellfish, meat, poultry, raw eggs or unpasteurized milk. However, there has been an increase in foodborne illness outbreaks from both fruits and vegetables. This happens when these foods are processed in poor conditions - fertilized by manure, washed with dirty water or sold as unpasteurized juices and milk products.

Follow the safe practices listed in this guide and you will keep the food you buy, prepare, cook and store as safe as possible. You ***can*** prevent foodborne illness from the food you fix and serve at home.

Safe Cleaning

Hands, Counter Tops, Utensils, Plates, Cutting Boards

Keep hands and all surfaces that touch food clean to prevent pathogens that cause foodborne illness from growing and living in your kitchen. Pathogens are the bad bugs - bacteria or viruses that cause food poisoning, also called foodborne illnesses.

CLEANLINESS THE SAFE WAY

1, Wash hands.

The FDA suggests that we use plain soap and water, not antibacterial soap. Lather up, rub hands together and scrub - backs of hands, between fingers and fingernails. Scrub hands for 20 seconds or longer, which is equal to singing “Happy Birthday” twice. Rinse hands under running water. Air dry or use a clean towel.

When should you wash your hands?

While preparing food:

* After touching ***raw*** meat, poultry, seafood or drippings
* After touching ***raw*** eggs
* Before eating
* Before preparing food
* After preparing food

Related to illness:

* Before treating a wound or being near someone who is sick
* After treating a wound or being near someone who is sick
* After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing

Other:

*After touching animals

*After touching garbage or animal waste.

*After using the toilet.

2. Wash fruits and vegetables ***before*** peeling.

This prevents the spread of pathogens from the outside on the skin to the inside of the fruit or veggie.

Seperate Safely

Certain foods need to be kept separate so that they do not come in contact, leak on or touch each other. Doing this prevents food items from spreading pathogens and germs between each item that cause foodborne illness.

WHAT, WHEN AND HOW TO SEPARATE FOOD

1. Meat and Produce

Use different cutting boards, utensils, and plates for ***raw*** meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs. Keep ***raw*** meats separate from fruits and vegetables.

2. Grocery Shopping

Keep ***raw*** meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs separate from other items while shopping by placing them in different plastic bags or containers that don't leak.

3. Raw and Cooked Food

Use different cutting boards, utensils, and plates for cooked and raw foods.

4. Wash All Items Well

Before using again - wash plates, utensils, and cutting boards thoroughly. This applies to any kitchen item that came in contact with ***raw*** meat, poultry, seafood, or eggs.

5. Replace Old Cutting Boards

Replace old cutting boards when they are worn or develop deep grooves that are difficult to clean.

6. Refrigerate

Keep ***raw*** meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs separate from other foods in containers or plastic bags when stored in the refrigerator.

7. Eggs

Keep eggs in original carton inside the refrigerator on a shelf, not in the door. The door of the refrigerator may not be cold enough to store eggs safely.

8. Freeze

Freeze foods that you do not plan to cook in a few days. See thenSafe Food Storage section for specific foods and time frames for storing safely.

Preparing and Cooking

REHEATING

There are specific ways to reheat food that you buy hot and refrigerate for left-overs later. These same rules apply for pre-cooked foods you buy at the grocery cold, like hot dogs, that need to be heated before serving.

OVEN

Reheat or heat food to 165 °F (74 degrees C). Use a food thermometer for accuracy. Bring soup or gravy to a rolling boil.

MICROWAVE

Cover food and rotate the dish so that food heats evenly. “Cold spots” are places where bacteria can survive and grow. Consult your owner’s manual for the complete instructions for your microwave model. Heat food until it reaches at least 165 °F (74 degrees C) throughout.

COOKING

Observation

You cannot tell if food is done by looking at its color and texture. Use a cooking thermometer.

Using a cooking thermometer

Food must be heated hot enough to kill harmful pathogens. Check if food is done by placing the thermometer in the thickest part of the food. Wait until the dial stops moving or use the time recommended by your brand of thermometer. Clean your thermometer with hot water and soap following use.

Temperature

Use the minimum cooking temperature chart from the USDA or the chart in this guide to ensure that food is cooked thoroughly enough to kill pathogens. When using a crockpot, chafing dish, warming tray or slow cooker - keep food hot at 140 degrees F (60° C) or hotter.

TRANSPORTING COOKED FOOD

When you take food to another location, it must be kept cold. Use an ice chest or cooler with plenty of ice or ice packs. The food must be kept at 40 degrees F (4° C) or colder.

BARBEQUES AND GRILLS

Use the chart for minimum internal cooking temperatures to ensure food is cooked thoroughly. Food may be brown on the outside but not fully cooked - use a *calibrated food thermometer to check for the safe minimum internal temperature.

SERVING COOKED FOOD

Don't reuse a platter that held r***aw*** meat. Use a clean platter when taking food off the grill. Or wash the used platter well with hot water and soap before reusing it. See the Safe Cleaning section for more information.

LEFT-OVERS

Refrigerate leftover food right away. Do not use as leftovers for later meals:

-If food has stayed out longer than 2 hours - it should be thrown away.

-If food has stayed out longer than 1 hour when the temperature is at or hotter than 90 °F (32° C).

*WHAT IS A CALIBRATED COOKING THERMOMETER?

A calibrated thermometer is one that can be checked for accurate temperature using the boiling water or ice water method. It has a nut or bolt that can be used to adjust the needle on the dial to the correct the temperature:

Check your thermometer in either ice water or boiling water. The temperature should read:

32 degrees F (0 degrees C) - ice water

212 degrees F (100 ° C) - boiling water

Digital thermometers have a reset button that is used instead of the nut to adjust the number to show the correct temperature. Read the instruction manual for your thermometer model. You can check the accuracy of non-adjustable or non-calibrated thermometers using the boiling water or ice water method but you cannot adjust them to read the corrected temperature if found to be incorrect.

Safe Food Storage

REFRIGERATOR

There are safe limits for refrigerated foods. If stored longer than these limits, food can become unsafe to eat. Here are a few examples of foods that should be refrigerated at 40 degrees F (4° C) or colder. For more food items and storage times see the Safe Refrigeration chart.

- Cooked meat or poultry - 3 to 4 days
- Luncheon meat - 3 to 5 days
- Egg, tuna or macaroni salads - 3 to 5 days
- Pizza - 3 to 4 days

FREEZER

The time frame for freezing food is used to ensure taste and quality *only*. Food can remain safely in the freezer forever. These suggestions are to ensure food tastes it's best. Not all food can be frozen, it will usually have a poor texture or taste when thawed.

Some examples of food and time frames for storing well in the freezer at 32 ° F or 0 ° C or colder:

- Cooked meat or poultry - 2 to 6 months
- Luncheon - 1 to 2 months
- Pizza - 1 to 2 months

THE DANGER ZONE

The “Danger Zone” is a temperature warmer than 40˚ F (4° C). The pathogens that can cause foodborne illness begin to grow in food left out too long above this temperature. The charts on Safe Refrigeration can help keep you in The Safety Zone. Food can remain safe when frozen forever but it loses taste, texture, and quality if frozen too long. The Freezer Storage chart gives information on which foods freeze well and time frames to keep food tasting it's best.

Safe Refrigeration Chart

Food	Refrigerate at 40 degrees (4° C) or greater no longer than:	Tastes best if frozen no longer than:
Leftover cooked meat or chicken	3 to 4 days	2 to 6 months
Leftover pizza	3 to 4 days	1 to 2 months
Luncheon meat opened or deli-sliced	3 to 5 days	1 to 2 months
Luncheon meat unopened	2 weeks	1 to 2 months
Egg, chicken, ham, tuna, macaroni salads	3 to 5 days	Does not freeze well
Soups, stews with vegetable or meat	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Hot dogs opened	1 week	1 to 2 months
Hot dogs unopened package	2 weeks	1 to 2 months
Fresh poultry, bird pieces	1 to 2 days	9 months
Fresh poultry, whole bird	1 to 2 days	1 year
Bacon	7 days	1 month
Sausage, raw	1 to 2 days	1 to 2 months
Roasts	3 to 5 days	4 to 12 months

Freezer Storage

Food	Refrigerate at 40 degrees (4° C) or greater no longer than:	Tastes best if frozen no longer than:
Ground Meats	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months
Chops	3 to 5 days	4 to 6 months
Fresh Meat, Steaks	3 to 5 days	6 to 12 months
Raw eggs in shell Beat	3 to 5 weeks	Don't freeze in shell. Beat yolks & whites together then freeze
Hard-boiled eggs	1 week	Don't freeze
Casserole, recipe has eggs	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months after baking
Pies, dense example: pecan, apple	3 to 4 days	1 to 2 months after baking
Pies, thin or fluffy example: lemon meringue, chiffon	3 to 4 days	Don't freeze
Quiche	3 to 4 days	1 to 2 months after baking

Minimum Internal Temperature

COOKING ON THE GRILL

WHOLE CUT MEATS

Beef, pork, lamb, veal, steaks, chops, and roasts - 145 °F (63 degrees C) or higher.
Allow meat to rest for at least three minutes before carving or eating.

GROUND MEATS

Ground beef, pork, lamb, and veal - 160 °F (71 degrees C)

POULTRY

Poultry - 165 °F (74 degrees C)

AFTER FOOD IS GRILLED

REHEATING COOKED MEATS

Hot dogs - grill to 165 °F (74 degrees C)

KEEP FOOD HOT

Until served — 140 °F (60 degrees C) or warmer.

- Set on side of the grill rack
- Keep in oven set at 200 °F (93 degrees C)
- Keep in chafing dish, slow cooker, or warming dish

Thank you for reading and helping to prevent foodborne illness. Protect the health of friends and families everywhere!

Laura