Food Safety

Food poisoning can result from eating contaminated food. Most food poisoning results from improper handling of food. You can help protect yourself by following basic food safety guidelines.

Avoid contamination of food

Food handling

- Always wash your hands with soap and dry well before handling and/or eating food.
- Wash utensils and work surfaces before and after use.
- Use separate chopping boards and utensils for raw and cooked foods and once finished clean thoroughly with hot, soapy water.
- Wash fruits and vegetables well.
- Keep pets/pests out of the kitchen and away from all food and preparation areas.

Food storage

- Keep raw and cooked foods separate.
- Store raw foods at the bottom of the fridge on a plate or in a container to avoid dripping.
- If you cannot remember how long something has been in the fridge, throw it out. See following guides for recommended fridge storage temperatures and times [https://www.csiro.au/en/Research/Health/Food-safety/Food-handling.aspx](https://www.csiro.au/en/Research/Health/Food-safety/Food-handling.aspx)
- Never eat food past the ‘use by’ date. Foods with a ‘best before date’ should be eaten before this date.
- Don’t eat foods from damaged or dented cans as it may be contaminated.
**Temperature control**

- Keep hot food hot (above 60°C) and cold food cold (at or below 4°C).
- Ensure cooked food is hot throughout.
- Reheat food thoroughly until piping hot and never reheat more than once.
- Follow cooking methods and reheating instructions on packaged foods.
- Microwave cooking can result in uneven heating of food, so it is important to follow instructions on standing time to allow the temperature of food to even out.
- Foods not going to be eaten straight away should be covered and put in the fridge.
- Never leave uncooked or cooked food at room temperature for any longer than necessary.
- Defrost foods in the fridge or microwave. Do not defrost foods on the kitchen bench.
- Do not refreeze food that has already been defrosted.
- Use an esky or cooler bag and ice packs if you need to travel more than half an hour or if the weather is warm.
- Keep your refrigerator clean and ensure the temperature is maintained below 4°C.
- Refrigerate leftover foods immediately (don't leave out on the bench to cool).