

# PLAYING IT **SAFE**

Be safe and healthy with these helpful tips provided by Huckaby & Associates.

## Foodborne Illness Prevention Strategies

*Helpful tips for reducing the spread of foodborne germs*

Foodborne illnesses can be life-threatening and can be transmitted quite easily. With nearly 50 million cases of foodborne illness occurring every year in the United States, food contamination may seem very difficult to prevent. However, by following these safety tips, you can ensure food safety and prevent foodborne illness at your facility.

### Safety Steps

Safe steps in food handling, cooking and storage are essential to preventing foodborne illness. You typically cannot see, smell or taste harmful bacteria that have the potential to cause illness. Keep food safe in every step of preparation.

- Wash hands and surfaces often.
- Separate foods to avoid cross-contamination.
- Cook foods to the proper temperatures.
- Refrigerate and store leftovers promptly.

### Food Handling Guidelines

- Refrigerate or freeze all perishable food items. The refrigerator should be set at 40° F or less and the freezer set at 0° F or less.
  - Check the temperatures with a thermometer designated for these appliances.
- Always thaw food in the refrigerator or under cold water, never sitting out at room temperature.
- Wash cutting boards and cooking

utensils immediately with soap and hot water after contact with raw meats to prevent bacterial contamination.

- Do not leave perishable foods sitting out for more than two hours.
  - If room temperature is above 90° F, do not leave foods out for more than one hour.
- If food is cooked, but will not be served for more than two hours, keep it in the oven at 140° F and cover with foil.
- Discard canned foods that are dented, seeping or bulging.
- Do not use packages that are torn or open.
- Poultry and meat is only good in the refrigerator for one to two days.
- Keep seafood in the refrigerator or freezer until right before use.
- Throw out foods with any sign of mold growth.
- Never store food near cleaning products or chemicals.
- Store condiments such as ketchup, mayonnaise and dressing in the refrigerator after opening.



### Did You Know?

Not just raw meat can carry foodborne germs. Fruits and vegetables also pose a threat for illness. Always rinse fresh fruits and vegetables in clean, running water to remove all visible dirt. Discard the outermost leaves of a head of lettuce or cabbage. And because bacteria can easily grow on cut fruit and vegetables, avoid leaving it out at room temperature for hours at a time.

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