



Storing Meals Safely

Remember these points:

- The longer your meals are left at room temperature, the less safe they are to eat. Once your meals have stopped steaming, get them in the fridge or freezer no more than two hours after being cooked
- Eat your refrigerated meals within two days – no later! If you don't think you'll eat them in the couple of days after cooking, freeze them
- Label and date any meals you are going to freeze
- Reheat food until it's hot all the way through (it should be steaming even after stirring)
- Don't thaw foods at room temperature. Thaw in the fridge or defrost in the microwave so bacteria don't grow
- Never refreeze meals - this increases food poisoning bacteria within the food
- Food poisoning bacteria grow and multiply fastest in the temperature danger zone between 5°C and 60°C

Watch out for high risk foods:

Food poisoning bacteria can grow in some types of food more easily than others. High risk foods that should be stored at or below 5°C include:

- Meat
- Poultry such as chicken and turkey
- Dairy products
- Eggs
- Cooked rice and pasta
- Prepared salads such as coleslaw, pasta and rice salads
- Prepared fruit salad
- Seafood
- Smallgoods such as salami and ham

If in doubt, throw it out!

Throw out high risk foods left in temperature danger zone for more than four hours – don't put them in the fridge and don't keep them for later.

Storing your food:

Make sure your food storage containers are clean and in good condition, and only use them for storing food. Cover them with tight-fitting lids, foil or plastic film to prevent the food drying out and to prevent anything from falling in. Do not store food in opened cans.