

How you choose, prepare and store your foods can make a huge difference to your health. This fact sheet will help you make food choices to stay healthy.

This fact sheet is about nutrition and food safety.



Food poisoning & cancer

Food poisoning happens when you eat food that has harmful bacteria, viruses or toxins. Cancer and the treatments you need for cancer can weaken your immune system. This means that it can be harder for your body to fight illness. You can get food poisoning more easily. Some foods such as meat, fish and eggs must be cooked before eating.

How can food poisoning affect my health?

Food poisoning can lead to diarrhea, vomiting or both. If it is serious, you may not be strong enough to get your cancer treatments. That is why it is very important to prevent food poisoning.



Vomiting
Stomach cramps



Diarrhea



Fever

You can protect yourself
by being careful about:

- Choosing foods
- Preparing foods
- Storing your foods
- Deciding what and where to eat

Choose foods carefully

A healthy diet includes many types of foods. Some foods such as meat, fish and eggs must be cooked before eating. Cook meat to the recommended minimum safe temperature (see guide p.6). Eggs should be cooked through, without a runny yolk.

Choose dairy products that are pasteurized. Cooking and pasteurization are ways to kill harmful bacteria in foods. Avoid raw milk and raw milk products at farmers markets and when traveling.

Wash your fresh fruits and vegetables. You can also choose frozen or canned fruits and vegetables.

Do not eat food that have mold, are damaged or that look spoiled. If you see mold, it means there is harmful bacteria in the food. Always check expiration dates on foods. Don't eat foods that are past this date.



Avoid:

- Non-pasteurized or "raw" dairy products, juices and honey;
- Home-made wine and beer;
- Soft or moldy cheese (Brie, Camembert, Blue);
- Pre-packaged salads, or fruits and vegetables cut in store;
- Raw vegetable sprouts (bean sprouts, alfalfa, etc...);
- Homemade canned foods, like jam, tomatoes, pickles and kim-chi;
- Food sold in bulk bins or from open serving containers, like in a buffet;
- Deli meats (cold cuts), unless cooked (for example, ham in an omelet);
- Probiotic yogurts. Regular, non-probiotic yogurts are fine;
- Avoid smoked fish (i.e. smoked salmon/lox, smoked herring etc.);

Prepare foods safely

Always wash your hands before cooking, eating and after touching raw meat, after sneezing, going to the bathroom or touching a pet.

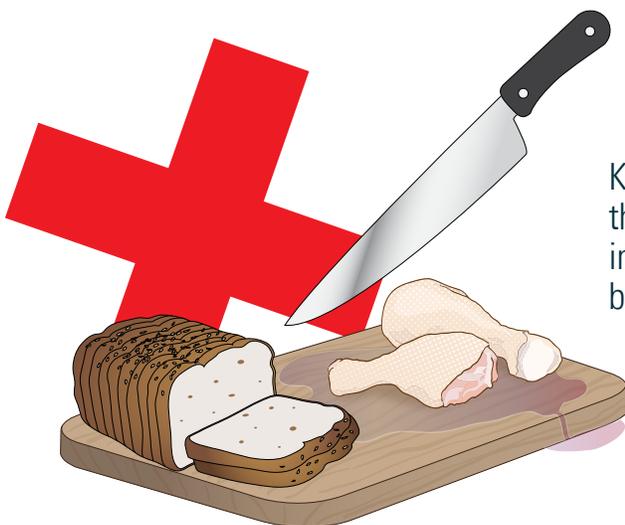


Wash:

- Cooking areas before and after use
- Raw fruits and vegetables in cold running water (even if pre-washed)
- Reusable grocery bags
- Using dish rags (avoid sponges). Replace them daily with a clean one.



This is one of the best ways to keep you and your food safe.



Keep raw meat away from other foods. Do this while shopping, cooking and storing in the fridge. Use a different knife, cutting board and dishes to handle raw meat.

Store your foods safely

Check the temperatures of your fridge and freezer.
Your fridge should be 4 degrees Celsius or less.
Your freezer should be 0 degrees Celsius or less.

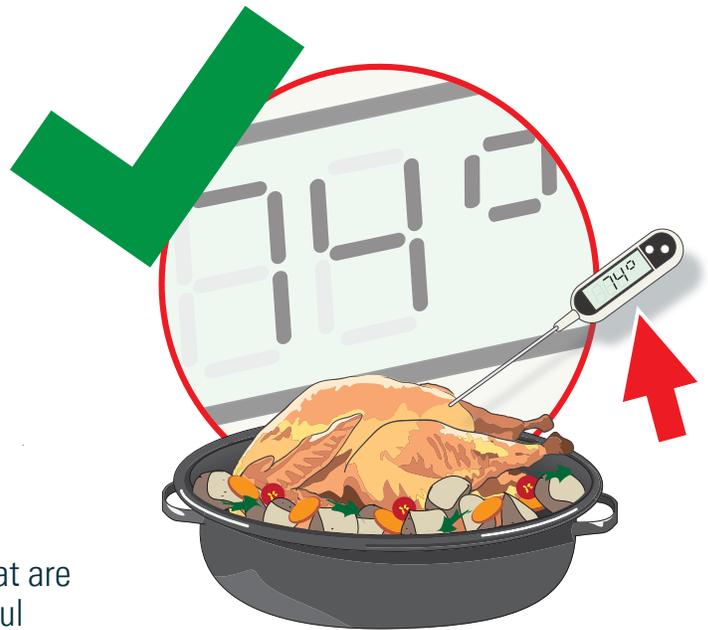
- Pay attention to expiration or “best before” dates. Do not eat any foods after these dates.
- Put hot foods in the fridge within 2 hours of cooking (or 1 hour during outdoor summer activities, like a picnic or barbecue).
- Cooking a large amount at one time can be convenient. Make sure to freeze extra portions right away.
- Throw out leftover foods that are more than 2 days old.
- Do not eat from open-service food stores or restaurants (Bulk food stores, salad bars).



Choose food and dining options wisely. Do not go to buffet-style restaurants. If you decide to eat in a restaurant be sure that it is one you know and trust.

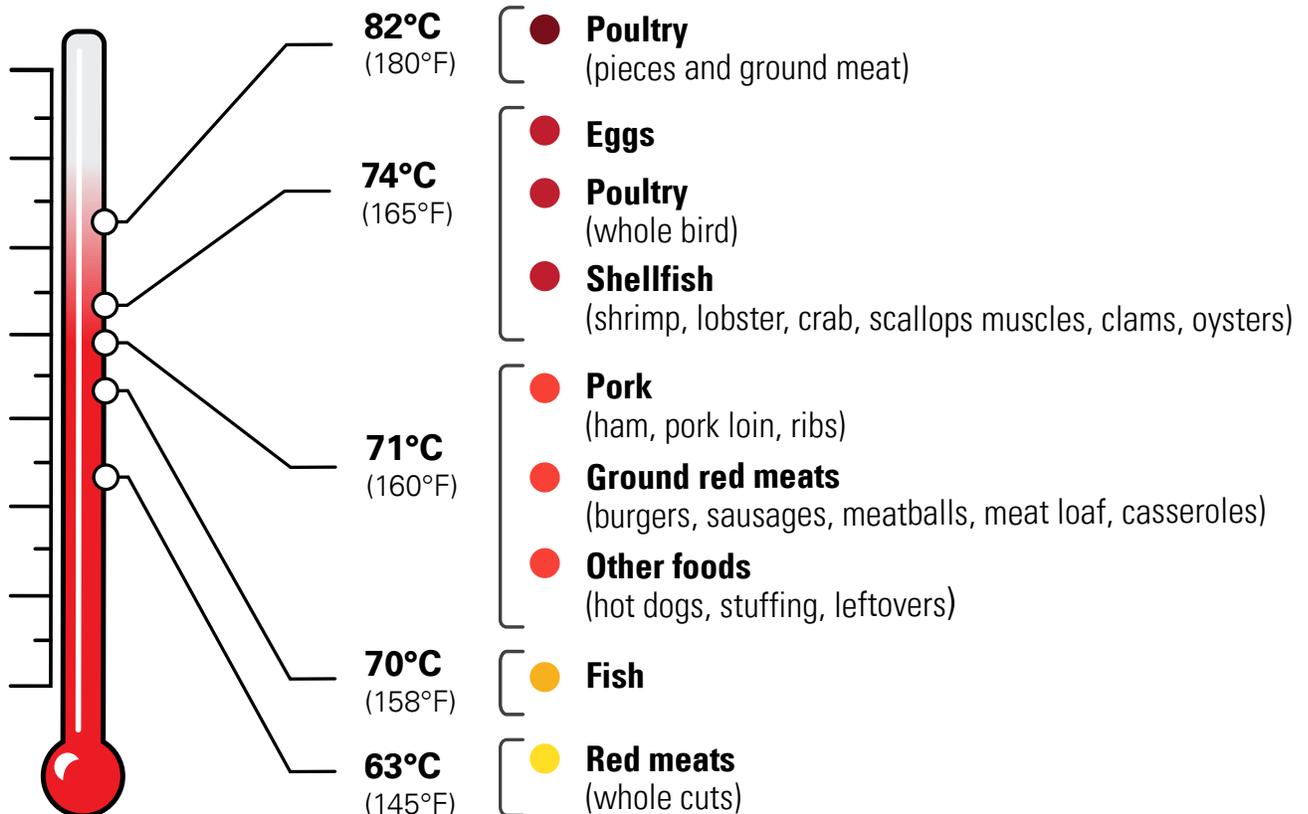
Food is best defrosted overnight in the refrigerator. If you are in a hurry, put the food in a container and soak the container in cold water. Change the water every 30 minutes. If you use the microwave to thaw food, it must be cooked right away.

- Always cook meat, fish, poultry and seafood to a safe internal temperature (see “Safe Cooking Temperatures” below). You can’t always tell just by looking.
- Reheat leftover food until they are hot all the way through. Soups should come to a rolling boil.
- Do not reheat leftover foods a second time. Throw out uneaten leftovers after reheating them once.



Follow these guidelines for all foods. Foods that are labeled natural or organic can also have harmful bacteria. If they do, they may not be safe for you. If you are not sure talk to your treating team before taking any of these products.

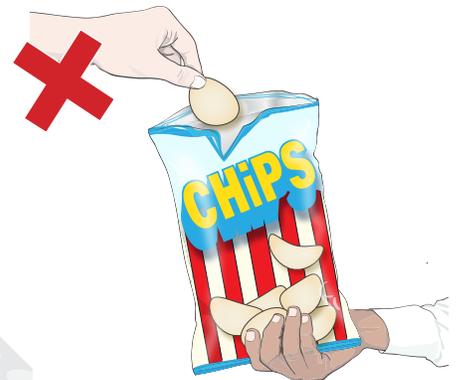
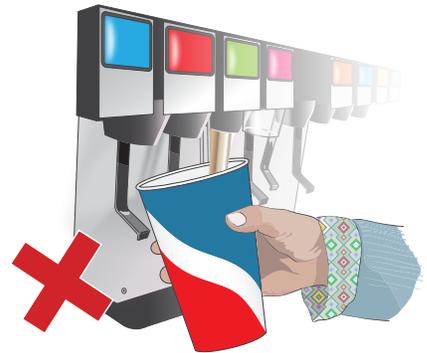
Safe Cooking Temperatures



Special section for people after a stem-cell transplant

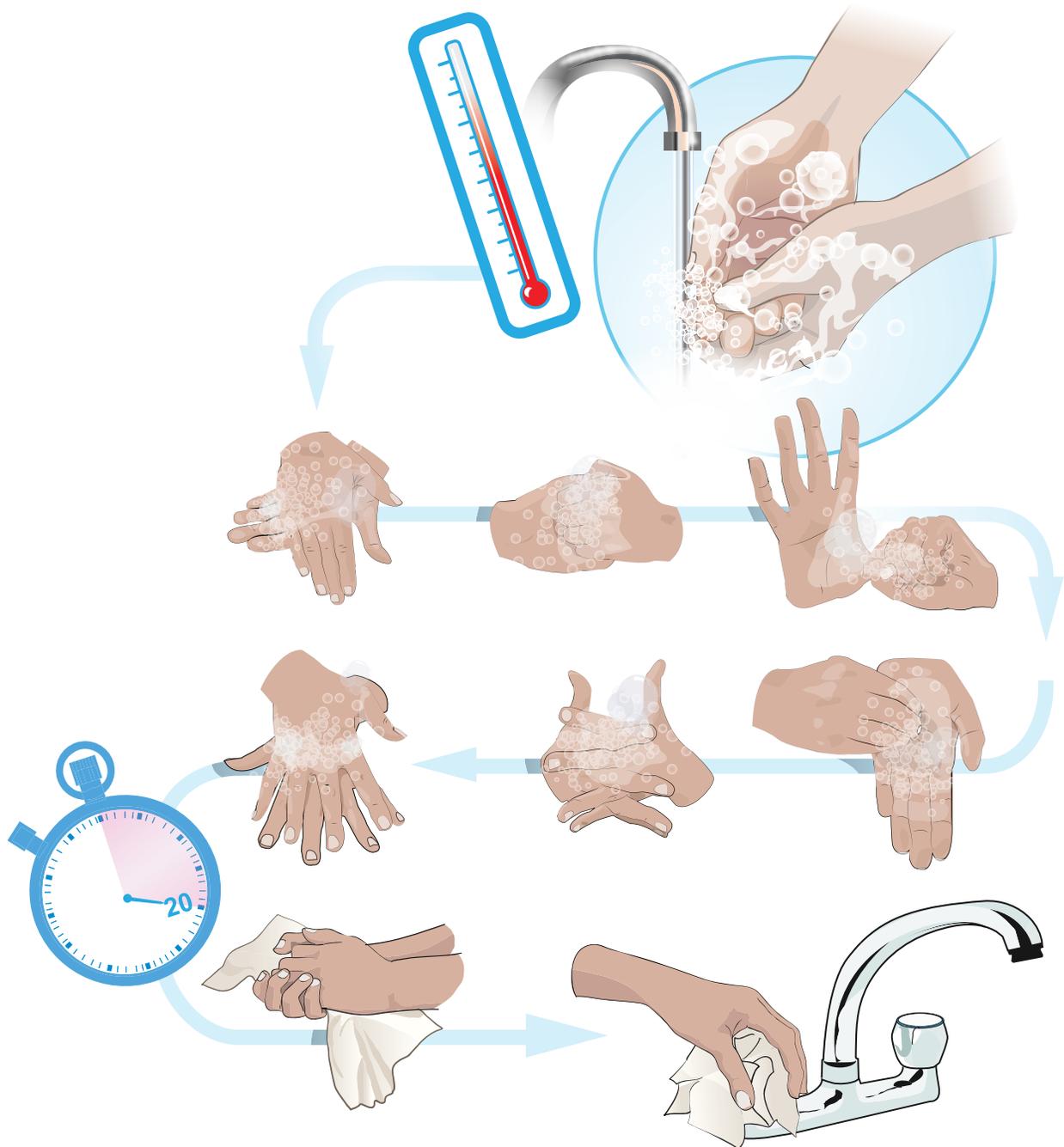
People need to be extra careful after a stem-cell transplant. If you had a stem cell transplant, it can take months or even years for your immune system to get back to normal. For this reason, you must be even more careful. If you have had a stem-cell transplant, follow the advice below for at least 6 months after your transplant:

- Do not share food with other people.
- Do not eat soft-serve ice cream or frozen yogurt.
- Do not drink fountain soda or other fountain drinks.
- Avoid drinking from public water fountains.
- Do not eat pastries that have filling and that have not been refrigerated (like donuts, eclairs or danishes).
- Ask for single serving condiments, like ketchup and mustard packets. (Open bottles are used by many people and can have bacteria, viruses, etc.).
- Don't go to restaurants at all. Food contamination in restaurants is common.



Wash Your Hands Properly

Wash your hands with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds.



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Office d'éducation des patients
Patient Education Office


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