

CORE 4



The Core 4 of Food Safety

Remembering these steps can help keep you and your family safe from foodborne illness.



Clean

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds, including before and after you touch raw meat, poultry and seafood.
- Clean work surfaces, cutting boards, dishes and utensils with hot soapy water before and after preparing different kinds of food items.
- Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water, including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten.



Separate

- Help prevent cross-contamination by keeping ready-to-eat foods away from raw foods like meat, poultry, seafood and eggs.
- Use separate cutting boards, plates and utensils for cooked foods and raw foods.



Cook

- Use a food thermometer to ensure meat, poultry, seafood and egg dishes are cooked to a safe temperature.



Chill

- Keep your refrigerator at 40°F or below and your freezer at 0°F or below.
- Keep food at a safe temperature when thawing and never defrost food at room temperature.



Visit the [Division of Food Safety Consumer Resources and Outreach website](#) for more food safety tips.