

Appetizers

Handling Your Food Safely

When you leave cooked foods or foods that require refrigeration at room temperature, bacteria may grow to dangerous levels. Bacteria grow rapidly between the temperatures of 40° F and 140° F. This range of temperatures is often called the “Danger Zone”.

Listed below are some helpful tips to keep you and your food safe, so you can enjoy the food and not the germs!

- The 2 hour rule states that perishable foods should not be left out at room temperature for longer than 2 hours. If they are left out longer than this, they should be thrown in the trash.
- If the room temperature is above 90° F, perishable foods must be thrown in the trash after 1 hour.



HELPFUL HINT



Once you remove a product in the grocery store from refrigeration, the 2 hour clock starts ticking. It is a good idea to put your refrigerated items in the cart last, and make the grocery store your final stop before you head home.

- You may think that the 2 hour rule will be hard to follow, especially during parties and holiday dinners, but there are some simple actions that can be taken to keep your food safe.



- Cold foods need to remain at 40° F or below. Keep cold foods in the refrigerator until it is time to eat. If the cold food is intended for snacking, set out a smaller amount and restock when the food is running low.
- Hot foods need to remain at 140° F or above. Keep hot foods in the oven until it is time to eat. Set the oven to a temperature that will keep the foods internal temperature above 140° F. Warming trays, crock pots, slow cookers, and chafing dishes can also be used to keep your hot foods hot.



- If you are transporting food use a cooler with ice packs to keep cold foods cold. Hot foods can be transported in insulated carriers.



Remember to keep your hot foods hot and your cold foods cold.