

# Enjoy your food. Don't let it turn nasty!

This series of fact sheets explain simple ways to make sure the food that you buy and take home to prepare for yourself, your family or friends remains safe. Australian food safety laws are designed to ensure that the food you buy is safe. All food businesses such as supermarkets, delis, butchers, fishmongers, take-away shops and restaurants, have to comply with these laws and standards by selling food that is safe to eat and free of any contamination. Food businesses have a responsibility for selling food that is safe to eat. Enjoy your food. But remember, it's up to you to make sure it does not turn nasty.

## Food poisoning

Food poisoning is frequently caused by bacteria from food that has been poorly handled, stored or cooked. The food may look, taste and smell normal. Some people are more at risk from food poisoning including young children, pregnant women, the elderly and people with other illnesses.

The symptoms of food poisoning may vary depending on the type of bacteria or contaminants causing the illness. You may experience one or more of the following symptoms:

- Nausea
- Stomach cramps
- Diarrhoea
- Fever
- Headaches

Symptoms can occur within 30 minutes after eating, or a number of hours later. They can be mild or severe. Some bacteria can also cause other symptoms. Listeria bacteria may cause miscarriage or other serious illness in susceptible people.

## Where to get help

- See your doctor
- Report your illness to your local council health department or the Department of Human Services, particularly if you think the illness is related to food that you have purchased or eaten so that the cause can be investigated.

food safety



## High-risk food

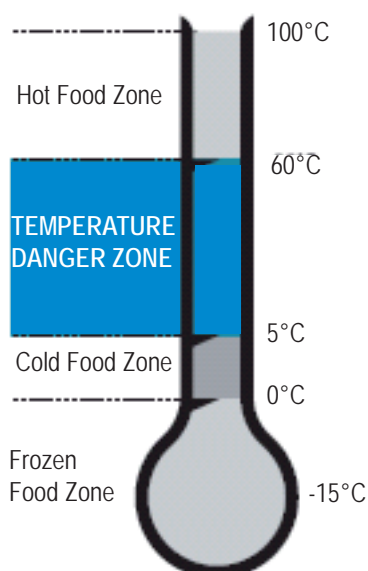
Food poisoning bacteria are often naturally present in food, and in the right conditions a single bacterium can grow into more than two million bacteria in just seven hours.

Bacteria grow and multiply on some types of food more easily than on others. The types of foods which bacteria prefer include:

- Meat
- Poultry
- Dairy Products
- Eggs
- Smallgoods, like salami and ham
- Seafood
- Cooked rice
- Cooked pasta
- Prepared salads, like coleslaws, pasta salads and rice salads
- Prepared fruit salads
- Ready-to-eat foods - foods are foods that can be eaten without further preparation or cooking such as pre-prepared salads, take-aways and prepared sandwiches.

## Ten easy steps to safe food...

1. Buy from reputable suppliers with clean premises.
2. Avoid spoiled foods, foods past their use-by dates or foods in damaged containers or packaging.
3. Take chilled, frozen, or hot foods straight home in insulated containers.
4. Keep raw foods and ready-to-eat foods separate.
5. Avoid high-risk foods left in the Temperature Danger Zone for more than 4 hours.
6. Keep high-risk foods out of the Temperature Danger Zone. Keep chilled foods cold at 5°C or colder and hot food hot at 60°C or hotter.
7. Thoroughly wash and dry hands when preparing food.
8. Use separate and clean utensils for raw foods and ready-to-eat foods.
9. Cook minced meats, poultry, fish and sausages thoroughly.
10. When in doubt, throw it out.



## Keep your food in the 'right' zone!

A basic rule-of-thumb is to keep 'high-risk' foods in the right temperature zone for as long as possible.

**Avoid leaving high-risk foods in the Temperature Danger Zone.**