The right choice... for a healthier you

FACT VS. FICTION
FOOD SAFETY

Food safety is important. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), each year 48 million people in the US—one in six— get sick, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die from eating contaminated food.

There are a range of external factors that can impact the safety of food, such as changes in food production and supply, an increase in imported foods, contamination due to environmental changes, and new and emerging types of bacteria. However, you can protect yourself and your family from foodborne illness by practicing safe food preparation and storage at home.

How much do you know about Food Safe practices? Check out some common myths and the facts below.

8 COMMON MYTHS DEBUNKED

MYTH
It is safe to eat leftovers if they look and smell okay.

FACT
The types of bacteria that cause illness don't affect the taste, smell, or appearance of food. Always label when you put away food for storage. If not sure how long your leftovers have been sitting in the refrigerator, throw them out. Toss refrigerated leftovers after 3-4 days.

MYTH
When food is cooked in the microwave, the microwaves kill any bacteria.
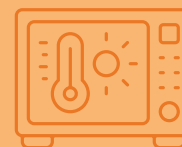
FACT
The heat generated by the microwave kills bacteria, but foods in the microwave can heat unevenly and leave cold spots where bacteria can survive. Bacteria is only killed when food is heated to a safe internal temperature.

MYTH
Plastic and glass cutting boards don't retain bacteria like wood cutting boards do.

FACT
All types of cutting boards can hold harmful bacteria on the surface. Regardless of the type of cutting board you use, it should always be washed and sanitized after each use.

MYTH
Raw chicken needs to be rinsed with water before cooking.

FACT
Rinsing raw chicken can spread harmful bacteria around your kitchen and onto ready-to-eat foods. Poultry should be cooked until the internal temperature reaches 165°F on a digital food thermometer to kill bacteria.

FOOD SAFETY *Continued...*

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MYTH
Freezing foods kills harmful bacteria that can cause foodborne illness.

FACT
Freezing will not make foods safe to eat; bacteria can survive freezing temperatures. When food is thawed, any bacteria that is present can start to multiply. Cooking food to the proper internal temperature will kill harmful bacteria in food.

MYTH
You should rinse bagged greens and packaged salads for extra safety.

FACT
Ready to eat greens and salads have been commercially prepared for your safety and convenience. If the package label says ready-to-eat, triple-washed, or no washing necessary, you don't need to wash them again and doing so can cause germs on your hands or kitchen surfaces to contaminate your greens or salad.

MYTH
If you drop food on the floor and pick it up within five seconds, it's safe to eat.

FACT
The "five-second rule" does not prevent bacteria and other germs from getting on food that has fallen on the floor. If the fallen food cannot be washed off, don't eat it.

MYTH
It is safe to thaw my frozen food on the kitchen counter since I am going to cook it right away.

FACT
Food must be kept at a safe temperature while thawing. Thaw food safely in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave. If thawed in cold water or in the microwave, it should be cooked immediately.

COOK TO SAFE MINIMUM INTERNAL TEMPERATURES
Use a food thermometer to ensure that foods are cooked to the right temperature.

POULTRY: 165 F	VEAL: 145 F
RAW HAM: 145 F	BEEF: 160 F
FISH: 145 F	PORK: 160 F
LAMB: 145 F	GROUND MEATS: 160 F
VEAL: 145 F	LEFTOVERS: 165 F

Source: FoodSafety.gov

FOOD STORAGE EXPIRATION DATES

USE BY 24 AUG

BEST BEFORE 16 OCT

USE BY
You've got until the end of this date to use or freeze the food before it becomes too risky to eat.

BEST BEFORE
You can eat food past this date, but it might not be at its best quality.

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