

It's not enough just being a good cook

By following these simple rules you can help avoid food poisoning.

Wash your hands

Wash your hands before you start cooking, before you eat, between handling different raw foods and after using the bathroom.

You should not cook for other people when you have diarrhoea, a soar throat or infected wounds.



Use clean equipment and cloths

Clean knives and carving boards frequently and keep the kitchen counter clean. Kitchen cloths can potentially be a bacterial bomb. Clean them in the washing machine at minimum 65°C or soak them in chlorine overnight. Change cloths frequently. Never use the same cloth for the table, counter and the floor. Kitchen roll is a good alternative to cloths.

Keep raw and cooked food separate

Change equipment between different kinds of food and between raw and cooked food. Alternatively clean equipment thoroughly between different tasks. This will prevent food poisoning bacteria transferring from raw food to cooked dishes.

Make sure it's hot enough

Bacteria thrive and rapidly multiply between 10 and 50°C. Most bacteria die if you heat up food sufficiently, which means 70°C or higher.

Minced meat, sliced and diced meat, and all chicken and pork products should always be well done. When cooking whole pieces of meat, for example beef or pork chops, ensure that the surface is well cooked because this is where bacteria will be found.

When heating up leftovers, make sure that the food is hot all the way through. It must be piping hot if it is to be kept warm before serving.

Rapid cooling

If the food you have cooked is not to be eaten for a while, it is best to cool it down rapidly and heat it up again later. For example, place a casserole in cold water and stir before placing it in the fridge. Split the food in smaller portions if you want it to cool down more rapidly.

Check the temperature in the refrigerator

Food that must be stored at a cool temperature should be put in the refrigerator. The temperature in the refrigerator should be 4°C or lower. A low temperature prevents bacteria from growing in the food.