



Food safety tips for young people leaving home

If you're leaving home for the first time, you're probably looking forward to eating your favourite food and experimenting in the kitchen. Who knows you could even be a budding Jamie Oliver. But remember, each year an estimated 5.4 million Australians get food poisoning. So do you know how to lessen the risk that the food you prepare or buy ready to eat will make you sick with food poisoning?

**You can help keep your food safe by following the four tips:
Clean, Cook, Chill and Separate.**

Clean

Bugs can get into food by hitching a ride on hands, working surfaces or utensils. You can stop them if you do these things, before you start to cook and after you handle raw meats.

- Wash your hands. Just running some water over your hands isn't enough to kill the bugs. Wash for 20 seconds with soap, rinse and then dry well.
- Wash and dry chopping boards, utensils and work surfaces.
- Use well cleaned chopping board, utensils and dishes for food that will not be cooked or heated before eating.
- Make sure you wash your hands thoroughly after handling a pet.

Cook

Raw meat may have bugs on it that can cause food poisoning if they're not killed before you eat the food. Solid pieces of meat, like steak or a whole roast will only have bugs on the outside surfaces. That means that when you cook them on the outside, the bugs will be killed. Because of this, it's safe to eat them when they're still pink or even red in the centre. But when the meat is minced, rolled up or cut into to remove the bone or to stuff it, the bugs from the outside surface spread to the inside.

- Always cook chicken or other poultry, minced or boned meat, hamburger, stuffed meat and sausages right through until all juices are clear to make sure all bugs are killed.
- Defrost frozen poultry and rolled and stuffed meat completely before cooking or else they may not cook right through.
- Always follow cooking instructions on packaged food.
- Reheat leftovers to steaming hot before eating.
- Never put cooked meat onto the same plate on which you had the raw meat without washing and drying it well. (Watch out for this mistake when barbecuing)

Chill

The number of bugs on food increases quickly at temperatures between 5 and 60 degrees Celsius. To stop this, you have to keep the food above 60 degrees or below 5 degrees where possible.

- Keep your fridge at 5 degrees or below.
- Keep all cooked food, vegetables, salads, dairy and similar food in the fridge.
- Refrigerate hot food as soon as it stops steaming – don't let it cool to room temperature on the bench top.
- Refrigerate leftovers promptly — it's not a good idea to leave the remains of your evening pizza on the bench overnight and then eat the rest for breakfast.
- If your fridge is too crowded, the cold air can't circulate properly. If you're having a party and your fridge is overloaded, do the unthinkable — take out the beer and wine. You can keep drinks cool by using Eskys or in the laundry tub packed with ice. This will not only leave more room in the fridge for the food, but will also mean the fridge gets opened less often and so stays colder.

Separate

Another way bugs from raw meat can spread from one food to another is by touching or dripping on to it. If the raw meat touches or drips on a food which will not be cooked before being eaten (like salad), the salad will then have the bugs on it. The bugs on the meat will be killed when you cook it, but you'll eat the salad – bugs and all.

- Keep raw meat and poultry from touching other food.
- Keep raw meat and poultry in the bottom of the fridge or, even better, in a sealed container, so it can't drip onto other food.
- Cover all stored food.

AND

IF YOU'RE SICK, ASK SOMEONE ELSE TO COOK OR GET A TAKE AWAY — DON'T SPREAD YOUR BUGS TO OTHERS.

By following these tips, you can help ensure that you, and people you cook for, are safe from food poisoning.