Food Hygiene

Avoiding cross-contamination

By following these simple practices in the preparation and handling of food products, you will be able to avoid cross-contamination.

Cross-contamination is what happens when bacteria is unintentionally transferred from one object to another. The most common example is the transfer of bacteria between raw and cooked food.

For example, when you're preparing raw chicken, bacteria can spread to your chopping board, knife and hands and could cause food poisoning.

Preparing food hygienically

•use different utensils, plates and chopping boards for raw and cooked food
•wash utensils, plates and chopping boards for raw and cooked food thoroughly between tasks
•make sure you do not wash raw meat
•wash your hands after touching raw food and before you handle ready-to-eat food

Storing food effectively

•cover raw food, including meat, and keeping it separate from ready-to-eat food
•use any dish that has a lip to prevent spillages
•store covered raw meat, poultry, fish and shellfish on the bottom shelf of your fridge

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Cooking food at the right temperature and for the correct length of time will ensure that any harmful bacteria are killed.
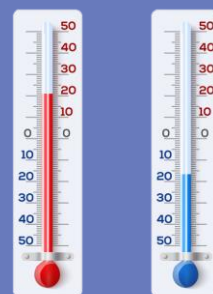
Cooking temperatures

Standard advice is to cook food until it has reached a core temperature of 70°C for 2 minutes.
The other time and temperature combinations are:
- 60°C for 45 minutes
- 65°C for 10 minutes
- 70°C for 2 minutes
- 75°C for 30 seconds
- 80°C for 6 seconds

You can check the temperature of a food, using a clean probe. Insert the probe so that the tip is in the centre of the food or the thickest part.
Watch this video to learn more about cooking temperature and time.

Food safety coaching (Part 9): Cooking safely - YouTube