



# Food Safety...

## How to Keep Good Food from Going Bad!

The Center for Disease Control estimates nearly 50 million people suffered from some type of food poisoning in 2011. Another way to look at it is that 1 out of every 6 people had some type of food poisoning!

What causes food poisoning? Several kinds of bacteria, improper handling, improper cooking and keeping raw or cooked food too long.



### Be careful when buying food:

- Make sure any packages have not been crushed or leaking.
- Choose fruits and vegetables that are not bruised or have skin that has been nicked.
- Buy convenience fruits and vegetables - those that are already cut - only if they have been stored in grocery store coolers.

- You should never be able to push down on the safety button on a can or bottle. If you can, it has lost its seal and is not safe to eat.
- Carefully look at packaged meats and make sure the wrapping has not been torn or lifted up.
- If there is any doubt about how a food looks or smells in the store - leave it!
- When checking out, make sure that meat and chicken is put into different bags from the rest of your food. That way, there's no chance of fluids leaking out onto other food and contaminating it.
- Invest in a "Cold Bag" when buying food that needs to stay cold. This will maintain the temperature until you get home.



### At home:

- Wash your hands before handling any food.
- WASH all fruits and vegetables. They are washed before getting to the store but think about all the hands that have been on them since being put out!
- Separate raw meat, chicken, seafood, eggs from other foods and refrigerate them as soon as possible. Your refrigerator should have a temperature of 40° to maintain food safety.
- Check the foods in your pantry and refrigerator and know the "use by" and "expiration" dates.
- Never keep leftovers for more than four days.
- If in doubt- throw it out!

### What do the dates on food packing mean?

- **Best if used by and use-by date:** This means the product should retain maximum freshness, flavor and texture if used by this date. It is not a purchase-by or safety date. Beyond this date, the product begins to deteriorate, although it may still be edible.



- **Expiration date:** *If you haven't used the product by this date, toss it out.* Other dating terms are used as a basic guideline, but this one means what it says.

- **Sell-by date:** This date is used by manufacturers to tell grocers when to remove their product from the shelves, but there is generally still some time left for home usage. For example, milk often has a sell-by date, but the milk will usually still be good for at least a week beyond that date if properly refrigerated.

- **Guaranteed fresh:** This date is often used for perishable baked goods. Beyond this date, freshness is no longer guaranteed although it may still be edible.



### How long can I keep it?

- **Meat, Turkey, Chicken and Other Poultry** - Use or freeze within 3-5 days or purchase or before the "sell by" date. Store in the refrigerator or freezer within 2 hours of purchase.
- **Seafood** - Use within 2 days. Store in freezer if not using within 2 days.

September

Is there a health topic you want to know more about? For more information contact Grace Keith, Health Educator, 850.926.0400 x. 215 or Grace\_Keith@doh.state.fl.us

- **Fruits and Vegetables** - Refrigerate perishable strawberries, lettuce, herbs, mushrooms and other produce at 40° after buying them. Refrigerate all cut or peeled produce. ALWAYS wash produce BEFORE chopping or cutting into it. If there is any bacteria on the surface, the knife will carry it to the inside of the fruit.
- **Eggs** - Store in the refrigerator 3 - 5 weeks. Never use an egg that is cracked.
- **Baby Food** - Refrigerate open packages within 2 hours. Discard open packages within 3 days of opening.

**What kinds of bacteria cause food poisoning?**

- **Salmonella** - Beef, poultry, milk, and eggs are most often infected with salmonella. But vegetables may also be contaminated. Contaminated foods usually look and smell normal.
- **Campylobacter** - Found in many domestic animals. The bacteria are passed in their feces, which can lead to infection in humans via contaminated food, meats (especially chicken), water taken from contaminated sources (streams or rivers near where animals graze), and milk products that haven't been pasteurized.
- **E Coli** - Raw vegetables and undercooked ground beef, contaminated water.
  - **Listeria** - Most commonly contracted by eating improperly processed deli meats and unpasteurized milk products. This bacteria can be deadly to a pregnant woman and her baby.



**Sign up for Food Recall alerts at:**  
<http://www.foodsafety.gov/recalls/alerts/index.html>

**Be sure to check the food in your hurricane survival kit!**



**Childbirth Preparation...** The Healthy Start Program offers a 5-week Childbirth Education class for pregnant moms and their partners. Topics include: coping with labor and delivery, comfort techniques, infant care - including Infant CPR, post-partum care, breastfeeding and car seat safety and fittings. The next series of classes are scheduled for **October 15-November 12 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.** All classes are held at the Wakulla County Health Department. For more information or to sign up for the class, call Mary Westbrook at 926-0400, ext. 233. There is **no charge** for this class!



**Stop Smoking Classes...** Tobacco Free Florida offers a number of free and convenient resources to help tobacco users quit. The Florida Quitline and WebCoach are available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. For more information about local, in-person classes, call Tonya at 926-0400, ext. 217. Smoking affects every organ in your body and stopping using any kind of tobacco can help you live a longer and healthier life! To get started visit <http://floridaquitline.com> or call 1-877-U-CAN-NOW (1.877.822.6669).



**Basic First Aid...** Please call for more information on the next class at the Health department. The course is endorsed by the American Safety and Health Institute. Call 926-0400, ext. 215 for more information or to register for a class. The cost is \$25.00 per person. The fee must be paid in advance and there is no refund.



The next Hands-only CPR class is on Thursday, October 17 from 7-9 p.m., 2013 at the Health Department. The course is endorsed by the American Safety and Health Institute. Call 926-0400, ext. 215 for more information or to register for a class. The cost is \$25.00 per person, the fee must be paid in advance and there is no refund.



The Florida Department of Health in Wakulla County has a Service Provider Kiosk to help you find who and what you are looking for. The kiosk is located in the lobby of the Health Department, which is open Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p. m.

You can search sites such as 211Big Bend, Whole Child Leon, Florida Department of Children and Families and Wakulla County Coalition for Youth Resource Directory. Many providers are local and have sliding scales for those families in crisis. You can find all types of services from daily needs to emergency assistance. This service is also very helpful in the event that you have just moved into the area. There is no charge to use the kiosk.

