

Selecting seafood. Buy fish that is refrigerated or properly iced. **Fish should smell fresh and not fishy, sour, or ammonia-like.** A fish's eyes should bulge and appear clear. Dull flesh could mean the fish is old. Fish fillets that have been previously frozen may have lost some of their shine, but they are acceptable to eat.

Properly Thaw Fish Safely. Thaw frozen seafood gradually by placing it in the refrigerator overnight. Seafood that must be thawed quickly, either seal it in a plastic bag and immerse it in cold water, or use a microwave.

Cook Fish Properly. Most seafood should be cooked to an internal temperature of 145°F. Use a thermometer, when possible. If you don't have access to a thermometer, use the following tips:

Tips to Cook Fish: Slip the point of a sharp knife into the flesh and pull it aside. The flesh should be opaque and separate easily. If you cooked the fish in the microwave, check it in more than one spot to help ensure doneness. **For Shrimp and Lobster:** The flesh becomes pearly-opaque. **For Scallops:** The flesh turns milky white or opaque and firm. **For Clams, Mussels, and Oysters:** Watch for the point at which their shells open, which means they're done. Throw out the ones that don't open

Concerns for Methyl mercury. Some fish can be contaminated with the neurotoxin, methyl mercury. If you are pregnant, nursing or considering pregnancy, you should avoid fish that has too much methyl mercury, such as: shark, swordfish, king mackerel; and tilefish.

Storage. Pack all seafood products separately or at the top of your grocery. When you get your seafood home, store it in the coldest part of your refrigerator at a temperature close to 32°F. Use fish quickly, within one to two days after you buy it. Fish that is not prepackaged should be washed under cold, running water and patted dry with an absorbent paper towel. The fish should then be wrapped in moisture-proof paper or plastic wrap, placed in a heavy plastic bag, or stored in an air-tight, rigid container until ready for cooking.

WEBSITE

<http://www.foodsafety.gov/http://www.fightbac.org/>

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University of Nevada
Cooperative Extension

Fact Sheet 07-34

SAFETY FIRST WHEN PREPARING THE HOLIDAY MEAL MEATS, EGGS, AND SEAFOOD



FOOD SAFETY WEBSITE

http://www.cabnr.unr.edu/nutrition/Outreach/Food_Safety.htm

For the holidays, we need to be careful in the kitchen to prevent food poisoning. Tens of thousands-perhaps millions-of incidents of food poisoning occur each year in the United States. These tips can help you avoid common food handling mistakes.

MEATS/BEEF

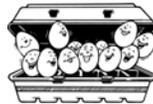
Safe handling of beef and other meats start at the grocery store.

- It is good practice to select your meats last just before going to the checkout register.
- Put packages of raw meats in disposable plastic bags to contain any leakage which could cross-contaminate cooked foods or produce.
- Meats are highly fragile products which are kept cold during store delivery. You need to take meats home immediately and refrigerate below 40 °F.
- Cook your meats within 3-to-5 days and 1-to-2 days for liver, kidneys, tripe, sweetbreads, or tongue.
- Freezing meats (0°F), will keep them safe for a year or more.

For long-term freezing, over wrap the store plastic with aluminum foil, freezer paper, or freezer-weight plastic wrap or bags. This will prevent grayish-brown leathery spots, so called "freezer burn," caused by air reaching the surface of food.

Marinating. Marinate meats or beef in the refrigerator for a maximum of up to 5 days. Discard any uncooked leftover marinade. If you want to use leftover marinade for brushing on meats during cooking, first boil the used marinade before brushing on cooked beef. This will kill any harmful bacteria left by the raw meats. **Caution:** never partially cook or brown meats to refrigerate and finish cooking later because any bacteria present wouldn't have been destroyed. *You can safely partially pre-cook meats with the microwave but only immediately before transferring it to the hot grill to finish cooking.*

Cooking. Hamburgers and ground beef mixtures (meat loaf) should be cooked to 160°F, checking with a meat thermometer. Whole muscle meats such as steaks and roasts may be cooked to 145°F for medium rare, 160°F for medium, and 170°F for well done.



EGGS

- Do not consume raw fresh eggs. Pasteurized egg products are safe because bacteria are removed.
- Thaw frozen egg products in the refrigerator or under cold running water.

- Store eggs in their original carton and refrigerate as soon as possible.
- If the container for liquid products has a "use-by" date, observe the date. Follow the storage and handling instructions provided by the manufacturer.
- Unopened dried egg products and egg white solids can be stored at room temperature as long as they are kept cool and dry. After opening product container, store in the refrigerator. For best quality, you should store frozen egg products up to one year only. Check to be sure your freezer is set at 0 °F or lower. After thawing, do not refreeze.



SEAFOOD

Avoid eating raw seafood. It is best to cook seafood thoroughly to minimize the risk of foodborne illness. If you choose to eat raw fish, eat fish that has been previously frozen, because freezing will kill some, but not all parasites. Some oysters are treated for safety after they are harvested, check information on the label. However, even these oysters should **not be eaten raw by people at risk** for foodborne illness (pregnant, elderly, Immune-compromised) for foodborne illness.