

# Consumer Food Safety Messages

## WHEN YOU GROCERY SHOP:

- Put raw meat in a plastic bag so dripping juices won't cross-contaminate other foods.
- Make raw meat one of your last purchases so it is unrefrigerated the shortest time.
- Pack raw meat, poultry & fish separately from other foods.
- If the trip home from shopping takes more than an hour, pack raw meat, dairy products and other perishables in an ice chest.

## KEEP YOUR BABY SAFE AND HEALTHY:

- Lids on baby food jars should always “pop” when they are first opened to show they were sealed properly and not opened.
- Only spoon-feed baby food directly from the jar when the entire jar will be used. Saliva from the spoon will be introduced into the food. Otherwise, put part of the baby food into a bowl or heating dish.
- Check the expiration date on the top lid of liquid infant formula. The vitamins in the formula decompose over time and the formula will not be nutritionally balanced beyond the date although it is still safe.

## FOOD SAFETY IN YOUR KITCHEN:

- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling food.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.
- Keep raw and cooked foods separate so they don't cross-contaminate.
- Wash your hands, the work area and utensils in hot, soapy water before and after each food preparation.
- Don't thaw meat, poultry or fish at room temperature. Use a microwave, the refrigerator, cold running water or cook it frozen.
- Wash fresh produce with water before eating it.
- Don't use swollen, leaking or severely dented cans and unsealed containers.
- When in doubt about the safety of a food, throw it away.

## STORING FOOD IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR:

- Refrigerate foods at 40°F or less. Keep a thermometer in your refrigerator to check temperatures.
- Cool left overs quickly. Put them in the refrigerator within 2 hours after cooking.
- Divide hot soups, stews or gravies into several shallow containers if cooling more than a gallon.
- Remove “stuffing” from poultry or meat before refrigerating. It acts as an insulator to slow cooling.

- Divide large cuts of meat into pieces 3” thick or less.
- Refrigerate and use leftovers within 2-3 days or freeze them immediately.
- Cover or wrap all foods in your refrigerator to prevent cross-contamination and keep foods from drying out.
- Store raw meats or defrosting meats on lower shelves so they don’t drip on other foods.

### **COOKING MEAT, POULTRY AND FISH:**

- Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before handling food and especially after touching raw meat.
- Color of meat or meat juices is a poor indicator of doneness.
- Always use a metal thermometer to check the final cooking temperature of animal foods such as meat, poultry or fish.
- Cook meat, poultry and fish thoroughly so foodborne pathogens do not survive. (Typical symptoms of foodborne illness include vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, sometimes fever and weakness.)
- Cook poultry to 170°F.
- Cook beef to 160°F.
- Cook fish to 150°F.
- Use a clean plate or platter for cooked meat.
- Discard or cook marinade used with raw meat.

### **FOOD SAFETY ON A PICNIC:**

- Place perishable foods in a well insulated, ice-packed cooler.
- Transport the cooler in the passenger area of your vehicle, not in the hot trunk.
- Cook picnic meats to 160°F, poultry to 170°F and fish to 150°F and fish to 150°F. Use a thermometer to check.
- Leave salads, eggs and dairy products in the cooler until ready to eat.
- Wash hands thoroughly before handling any food and after handling raw meat.
- Return perishable left overs to the cooler within one hour.

### **BROWN BAG LUNCH SEMINAR:**

- If the lunch is stored unrefrigerated, avoid using perishable foods such as potato salad, meat, chicken, ham or turkey.
- Use insulated lunch packs or vacuum bottles to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold,.
- Freeze lunch sandwiches ahead of time, they will thaw by lunch. (Certain foods such as mayonnaise and boiled eggs do not freeze well.)
- The safest ingredients include cheese, dry sausage, peanut butter & jelly and hard boiled eggs.