

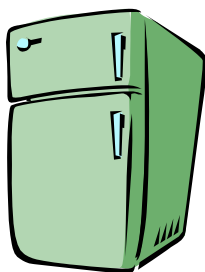
Food Safety: DOES YOUR KITCHEN PASS THE TEST?¹

Jennifer Hillan²



Older adults are at increased risk for foodborne illness. To help reduce the risk, it's important to follow safe food handling practices at home. How does your kitchen measure up?

1. The temperature of my refrigerator is:
 - a. 50 degrees Fahrenheit (10 degrees Celsius).
 - b. 40 degrees Fahrenheit (5 degrees Celsius).
 - c. I've never measured it.
2. Leftover cooked stew or other food with meat, chicken, or fish is:
 - a. Cooled to room temperature, then put in the refrigerator.
 - b. Put in the refrigerator immediately after the food was served.
 - c. Left at room temperature overnight or longer.
3. The last time the kitchen sink drain and disposal in my home were sanitized was:
 - a. Last night.
 - b. Several weeks ago.
 - c. I can't remember.
4. I defrost meat, poultry, and fish products:
 - a. On the counter.
 - b. In the refrigerator.
 - c. In the microwave.
5. The last time there was cookie dough in my home, the dough was:
 - a. Made with raw eggs, and I sampled some of it.
 - b. Made with raw eggs, refrigerated, and then I sampled some of it.
 - c. Not sampled until the cookies were baked.
6. If I use a cutting board to cut raw meat, poultry, or fish and then use it to chop another food, the board is:
 - a. Reused as is.
 - b. Wiped with a damp cloth.
 - c. Washed with soap and hot water.
 - d. Washed with soap and hot water and then sanitized.
7. I clean my kitchen counters and other surfaces that come in contact with food with:
 - a. Water.
 - b. Hot water and soap.
 - c. Hot water and soap, then a bleach solution or a commercial sanitizing product.

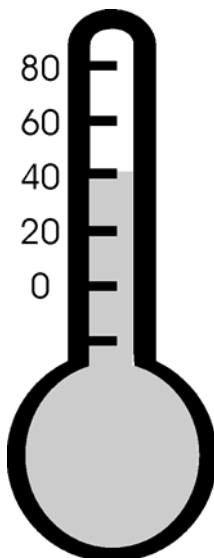


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1. La versión en español de este documento es *Cuidadaos de Alimentos: Usted Cree Que Su Cocina Pasa La Prueba?* (FCS8801-Span). This document, FCS8801, is one in a series of the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, IFAS, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611. First published: April 2007. Please visit the EDIS Website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>
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Answers

1. The right answer is B. Refrigerators should stay at 40°F or less to slow the growth of most bacteria. The temperature won't kill the bacteria, but it will keep them from multiplying, and the fewer bacteria there are, the less likely you are to get sick. Freezing at 0°F or less stops bacterial growth, but it won't kill bacteria already present in food.
2. The right answer is B. Hot foods should be refrigerated as soon as possible within two hours after cooking. Don't keep food that's been standing out for more than two hours.
3. The right answer is A. The kitchen sink drain, disposal, and connecting pipe should be sanitized periodically. Make a solution of one teaspoon bleach in one quart (about one liter) of water and pour it down the drain.
4. The right answers are B and C. You can also thaw food in clean, cold water that is changed every 30 minutes. If you use this method, be sure not to leave the food thawing for more than two hours. Do not thaw food on the counter or in the sink without cold water. Bacteria can multiply quickly at room temperature.



5. The right answer is C. Eating foods made with raw or undercooked eggs can lead to foodborne illness. Be sure to cook foods made with raw eggs to at least 160°F. Cook eggs until both the yolk and white are firm, not runny.
6. The right answer is D. Never let raw meat, poultry, or fish (or their juices) come in contact with other foods. Washing with a damp cloth will not remove bacteria. Washing with soap and water might not do the job either. You can sanitize cutting boards in a solution of one teaspoon bleach in one quart (about one liter) of water. You can also sanitize them by running them through the dishwasher.
7. The right answer is B or C. Hot soapy water will clean, but bleach and commercial kitchen cleaning products will sanitize and kill some bacteria.