

## Food Safety Tips

- Aim to keep the temperature of the fridge between 0°C and 5°C (32°F and 41°F).
- Keep a fridge thermometer in the fridge and check the temperature regularly.
- Keep the perishable foods, like cooked meats, in the top of the fridge separate from raw foods.
- Take chilled and frozen food home as quickly as possible.
- Wrap or cover all raw or uncooked foods so that they can't touch or drip on to other foods and contaminate them.
- Don't overload the fridge: the cooling air that circulates to keep the fridge cold gets blocked and pockets of warm air form.
- Don't put hot food in the fridge: let it cool first.
- Don't keep food beyond its "use by" date. Check what the label says about refrigeration and shelf life.
- Empty any part-used can into a bowl and cover it, otherwise the tin may contaminate the food.
- Do not handle food if you are unwell with diarrhoea and/or vomiting.

## What are 'use by' and 'best before' dates

**Use by** is an instruction to use the food by the end of the date given on the label. Keeping food beyond this date could put your health at risk. We cannot rely on our senses alone to tell us when food is 'off'. It is not always obvious when food becomes unsafe to eat.

A **best before** date mark is used on food that can be safely kept for longer periods. After this date the food may no longer be at its best. Even frozen, dried and canned foods start to deteriorate with time. So if we want to enjoy the food at its best, it should be used by the best before date.

**Large print, taped or other language versions of all or any part of this leaflet can be made available on request. Please telephone 0115 931 6030.**

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## Food safety tips for the Elderly and Vulnerable



Erewash Borough Council

EREWASH



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## Food Safety Tips

Both the elderly and the very young are particularly vulnerable to food poisoning, especially if they are not well. For the elderly, the illness which in younger days they used to be resistant to, or recovered from quickly, could now be serious.

This leaflet is a reminder of some simple rules for safe food handling.

### Safe Handling

Cross contamination is the transfer of bacteria from foods (usually raw) to other foods. The bacteria can be transferred directly when one food touches (or drips onto) another, or indirectly, for example from hands, equipment, work surfaces, or knives and other utensils.

Cross contamination is one of the major causes of food poisoning.

These are some of the most common causes:

- Storing raw and ready-to-eat food together.
- Not washing hands after touching raw food.
- Using the same chopping board or knife for raw and ready-to-eat food.

Food can be cross contaminated very easily when it is handled. Therefore it is essential that you maintain good standards of kitchen and personal hygiene at all times to ensure that food does not get contaminated with harmful germs and dirt.

### Check food regularly

Always check food before you buy it. Do not buy dented cans or damaged foods because they will not keep, and may be unsafe to eat.

Look at the date on the food. Perishable foods like cooked meats and dairy products will have a "use by" date.

### Keep perishable food in a refrigerator. Make sure you throw away food which has passed its "Use by" date

Check your cupboards and refrigerator regularly and throw out any old foods. Remember it costs more for you to be ill than it does to throw away out of date food.

### Don't leave food at room temperature

If you cook your own food, eat it immediately. If you have meals delivered eat them immediately, while they are hot. If for some reason you do not eat a hot meal as soon as you receive it you must refrigerate it and reheat it very thoroughly.

DO NOT LEAVE FOOD FOR SEVERAL HOURS IN A WARM ROOM

### Frozen Foods

Do not cook food straight from frozen, unless the label says you can. Instructions on labels are very important and should be followed. Defrost frozen foods such as chickens completely before cooking and cook thoroughly.

### Eggs

Salmonella is still found in some eggs. It is a very serious illness for the elderly and it is especially important to follow these rules :-

- always cook eggs thoroughly.
- never eat uncooked products made with raw eggs.
- never use cracked eggs.
- always keep eggs in a refrigerator.
- use eggs within three weeks of laying.