NUTRITION CORNER Food Safety

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With the changing of the seasons it is important to remind everyone, and especially those who receive home delivered meals of food safety!

The home meals delivered meals, hot or cold, are perishable and can cause illness if mishandled. Proper handling and storage is important to ensure food remains safe to eat.

Place your meals in the refrigerator if you don't plan on eating them right away. Bacteria grows most rapidly in the "**DANGER ZONE**" temperatures of 40-140 degrees. Perishable food left at room temperature for more than 2 hours should be thrown away.

If you prepare your own meals or receive home delivered meals: place food in the refrigerator if you will not be eating them immediately. You can reheat your food when you are ready to eat.

Follow these easy steps for all perishable foods :
Store food in refrigerator at 40 degrees or below

- Use shallow containers to store food
- Remove any stuffing from whole cooked poultry before refrigerating

Food delivered cold should be eaten within 2 hours or refrigerated or frozen to be eaten at another time.
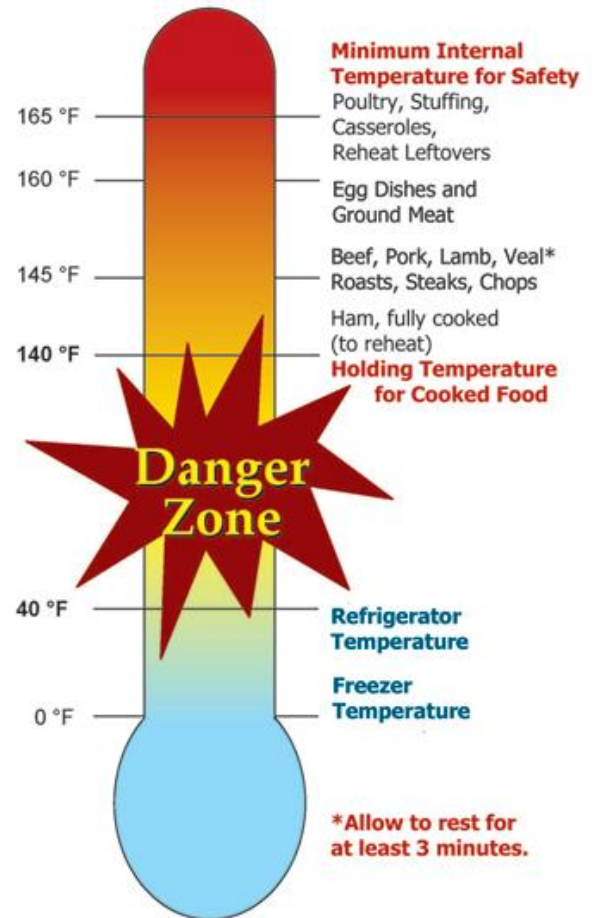
Food Item	Refrigerate at 40 degrees	Freeze at or below 0 degrees
Cooked meat/poultry	3 to 4 days	2 to 6 months
Pizza	3 to 4 days	1 to 2 months
Luncheon Meats	3 to 5 days	1 to 2 months
Egg, tuna, and macaroni salad	3 to 5 days	Do Not Freeze

Reheating:

- Reheat food to 165 degrees using a food thermometer. Bring soup or gravy to a boil.
- When using a microwave to reheat food, cover food and rotate the dish so that food heat evenly. This prevents cold spots from haboring bacteria. Heat food until it reaches at least 165 degrees throughout!