

Leftover Safety Guidelines

Preparing Leftovers to Refrigerate or Freeze

- Refrigerate or freeze within in 2 hours after cooking
- Cool food before placing in the refrigerator or freezer
- Divide large cuts of meat or items in shallow containers for quicker cooling
- Wrap in tight packing or an air tight storage container
- Label packaging with a date to know when to use it or toss it
- Refrigerate at 40 degrees or below or Freeze at Zero degrees

Thawing Leftovers Safely

- Refrigerator method takes the longest but is the safest
- Cold water thawing is a little quicker - Food should be placed in a leak-proof package or bag and water should be changed every 30 minutes
- Microwave method is the quickest
- After thawing use food within the leftover storage guidelines

Heating Leftovers

- Heat to 165 degrees
- Reheat soups, sauces and gravies to a rolling boil
- Cover the leftovers to keep in the moisture, making sure it gets heated all the way through when heating in the microwave
- Cover and rotate food for even heating

Refreezing Previously Frozen Leftovers

Safely freeze the food after reheating to 165 degrees and freeze following above guidelines

"According to the Centers of Disease Control (CDC) there are 48 million cases of foodborne illness yearly equivalent to 1 of 6 Americans"

*"Annually 30 - 40% of food in the U.S. is wasted
Approximately 20 lbs per month/person = \$165 billion in food waste each year"
Source: U.S. Food & Drug Administration*

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Sources: <https://www.fda.gov> & www.fightbac.org

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