



Color is Not a Reliable Indicator of Safety



Check with a Food Thermometer



Microwave to Safe Temperatures

Cook to Safe Temperatures



Safely cooking food is a matter of temperature. Foods need to reach a high enough internal temperature to kill bacteria that can cause foodborne illness.

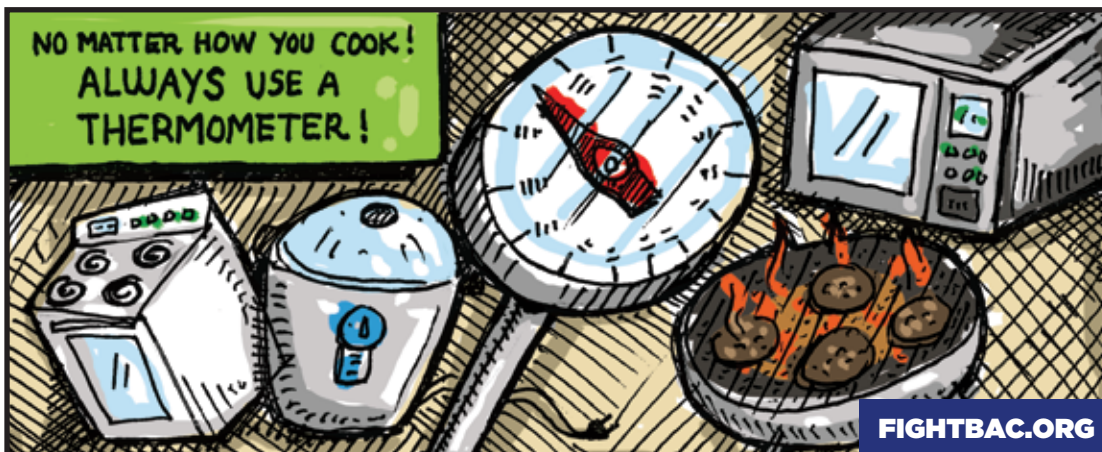


Color is Not a Reliable Indicator of Safety

- Color and texture are not reliable indicators of whether food has reached a high enough internal temperature to destroy pathogens.
- According to USDA research, **1 in 4 hamburgers turns brown before reaching a safe internal temperature.**
- The best way to ensure safety is to use a food thermometer.

Check with a Food Thermometer

- **Use a food thermometer** to ensure that meat, poultry, seafood, egg products, leftovers and casseroles are cooked to safe temperatures to destroy any harmful bacteria.
- Compare your thermometer reading to the chart to make sure food has been cooked to a safe temperature.
- Food thermometers should be placed in the **thickest part of food**, making sure not to touch bone, fat or gristle.
- **Clean your food thermometer** with hot water and soap after each use.
- For information about calibrating your food thermometers, check out the **Thermometers and Food Safety Web page** from the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service.



Microwave to Safe Temperatures

Read and follow package cooking instructions.

- Most prepared convenience foods are not ready to eat right out of the container.

Know when to use a microwave or conventional oven.

- Sometimes proper cooking requires the use of a conventional oven, not a microwave.
- Some convenience foods may be shaped irregularly or are thicker in some areas and may not cook evenly in a microwave oven. It is important to use the appliance and the method recommended on the label.

Know your microwave wattage before microwaving food.

- If your microwave's wattage is lower than the wattage mentioned in the label's instructions, it will take longer than the instructions say to cook the food to a safe internal temperature.

Always use a food thermometer to ensure a safe internal temperature.

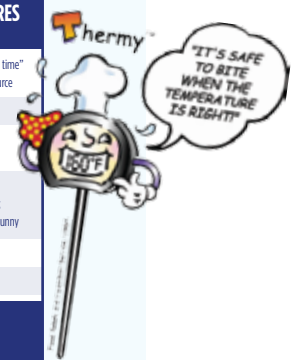
- Use a food thermometer to test food in several places to make sure it has reached a safe internal temperature.
- For more information on microwaving foods to safe temperatures, check out the **Cook it Safe! fact sheet** at fightbac.org.



SAFE MINIMUM INTERNAL TEMPERATURES	
as measured with a food thermometer	
Beef, pork, veal and lamb (roast, steaks and chops)	145°F with a three-minute "rest time" after removal from the heat source
Ground meats	160°F
Poultry (whole, parts or ground)	165°F
Eggs and egg dishes	160°F, but cook eggs until both the yolk and the white are firm; scrambled eggs should not be runny
Leftovers	165°F
Finfish	145°F

GUIDELINES FOR SEAFOOD	
Shrimp, lobster, crabs	Flesh pearly and opaque
Clams, oysters and mussels	Shells open during cooking
Scallops	Milky white, opaque and firm

Download and print this chart here.



Important Cooking Tips to Remember: Entertaining and On-the-Go Foods

- When entertaining and serving hot food buffet-style, use a chafing dish, warming tray or slow-cooker to keep food hot.
- When bringing hot foods to a party or traveling with hot foods, transport them in insulated thermal containers. Keep containers closed until serving time.

THE FOUR WAYS TO FIGHT BAC!

