What to Do?

- Do not leave cooked food at room temperature for more than 2 hours
- Promptly refrigerate all cooked and perishable foods (preferably below 5°C)
- Keep cooked food piping hot (more than 60°C) prior to serving
- Do not store food too long, even in the refrigerator
- Do not thaw frozen food at room temperature. For example, thaw in microwave, in bottom of refrigerator or under cold running water.

USE SAFE WATER AND RAW MATERIALS

Why ? Raw materials including, water, ice and ingredients may be contaminated with dangerous germs and even toxic chemicals. Some chemicals may be formed in moldy or damaged foods. Therefore it is best to carefully select your raw materials and practice simple measures such as washing and peeling to help reduce risk to yourself and family.

What to Do?

- Use safe water or treat it to make it safe
- Select fresh and wholesome foods
- Choose foods processed for safety, such as pasteurized milk
- Wash fruits and vegetables, especially if eaten raw
- Do not use food beyond its expiry or use by date

Safe Food and You

IS YOUR FOOD SAFE?

5 KEYS TO SAFER FOOD

Brought to you by the
Food Safety & Quality Unit

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BAHFSA

**The Bahamas Agricultural Health
&
Food Safety Authority**

THE SITUATION

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More than 210,000 people suffer an episode of foodborne illness every day in the Americas, and half of them are children under 5 (PAHO/WHO, 2015). The risk of these illnesses can be increased by poor handling, unsafe water and ingredients, and inadequate cooking and temperature management. To prevent these illnesses, the Bahamas Agricultural Health & Food safety Authority (BAHFSA) recommends "five keys to food safety"

1. Keep Clean   2. Separate Raw and Cooked

3. Cook Thoroughly

4. Keep Food at Safe Temperatures

5. Use Safe Water and Raw Materials

KEEP CLEAN

Why ? Dangerous microorganisms are found all around us. These microorganisms or germs can be found on hands, utensils, surfaces, wiping cloths, and especially cutting boards, where the slightest contact can transfer them to food and cause foodborne diseases.

What to Do?
- Wash your hands before handling food, or often during its preparation
- Wash your hands after going to the toilet
  - Wash and sanitize all surfaces and equipment used for food preparation
  - Protect kitchen areas and food from insects, pests and other animals

SEPARATE RAW AND COOKED

Why ? Dangerous microorganisms can be found in raw foods especially meat, seafood, poultry and their juices, where they can be easily transferred and contaminate other foods during preparation or storage.

What to Do?
- Separate raw meat, seafood and poultry from other foods
- Use separate equipment and utensils such as knives and cutting boards for handling raw foods
- Store food in containers to avoid contact between raw and prepared

COOK THOROUGHLY

Why ? Properly cooking your food will kill almost all dangerous microorganisms. Studies have reported that cooking food to a temperature of 70°C can help ensure it is safer for consumption. However, some foods may require special attention, such as minced meats, whole poultry, rolled roasts, and large joints of meat.

What to Do?
- Cook food thoroughly, especially meat, poultry, eggs and seafood
- Bring foods like soups and stews to boiling to make sure that they have reached 70°C. For meat and poultry, make sure that juices are clear, not pink. Ideally, use a thermometer
- Reheat cooked food thoroughly

KEEP FOOD AT SAFE TEMPERATURES

Why ? Microorganisms can multiply rather quickly if your food is stored at room temperature. The growth of these microorganisms, however, can be slowed or halted if food is kept at temperatures below 5°C or above 60°C.
N.B. Some dangerous microorganisms can still grow below 5°C.

THERMOMETER SHOWING DANGER ZONE

Keep cooked food at 60° C or above

Don't keep your food in the Temperature Danger Zone 5°C to 60°C for more than 2 hours

5°C - 60°C DANGER ZONE

Keep chilled food in the refrigerator at 5°C or below

Keep frozen food in the freezer at -15°C or below

80°C
70°C
60°C
50°C
40°C
30°C
20°C
10°C
0°C
-10°C
-20°C