

ADULT DAY STAY: FACT SHEET



Food Safety Basics for Adult Day Stay Programs

INTRODUCTION

Food safety is a major component of maintaining safe environments and providing nutritious foods in adult day stay settings. Older adults and individuals with disabilities are at greater risk of becoming sick from improperly handled food than younger adults. In older adults, their immune systems may not recognize and rid the body of harmful germs properly. Those with disabilities or weakened immune systems cannot fight off germs properly, increasing their risk for foodborne illness (i.e., food poisoning). Focus on food safety basics to reduce the risk of illnesses and even death in adult day stay participants.

APPLICATION

Know Common Causes of Foodborne Illness

- Poor handwashing practices
- Washing meat and poultry
- Improper cooling of foods
- Improper cooking and holding temperatures
- Infected workers
- Cross-contamination

Start with Safe Food

- Buy only from reputable food vendors or grocery stores.
- Visually inspect all items and reject any unacceptable ones such as torn packages and bulging cans.
- Check “use by” and “expiration” dates.
- Check and record the temperatures of frozen and refrigerated items.
- Store frozen and refrigerated items immediately upon receiving them.

Store Foods Properly

- Keep storage areas clean.
- Keep dry storage temperatures between 50 °F and 70 °F.
- Use First In, First Out (FIFO) inventory control.
- Store items at least 6 inches above the floor.
- Store chemicals away from food.
- Refrigerate cold food at 40 °F or below.
- Store frozen food between 0 °F and -10 °F.
- Cover, label, and date all food items.
- Prevent condensation from dripping on food.
- Do not store raw foods above ready-to-eat foods.
- Use separate refrigeration when possible.

Remember Time

- Do not serve food that has been in the temperature danger zone (40 °F to 140 °F) for more than 4 hours.
- Reheat foods to 165 °F within 2 hours.
- Cool foods from 140 °F to 70 °F within 2 hours and from 70 °F to 40 °F within an additional 4 hours.

Prevent Cross-Contamination

- Wash your hands properly and as needed.
- Clean and sanitize work surfaces, cutting boards, choppers, and other equipment before and after each use.
- Use separate cutting boards, pans, and utensils for ready-to-eat and raw foods.
- Never place cooked food on an unwashed and sanitized plate that previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood.
- Do not mix leftovers with fresh foods when storing, reheating, or serving.
- Store raw meat on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator in a leakproof container.
- Store cleaning supplies and other chemicals away from food supplies.
- Store foods only in clean, sanitized containers and bags approved for food storage. Trash bags should not be used to store food or ice that will come in contact with food.
- Use proper hair restraints.
- Use gloves properly. If not used properly, gloves are the same as dirty hands.
- Do not allow sick employees to handle food.

Keep Hot Foods Hot and Cold Foods Cold

- Maintain cold foods at 40 °F or below.
- Cook foods to their proper internal temperatures.
- Hold cooked foods at 140 °F or above.
- Keep thermometers clean, sanitized, and calibrated.

Refer to your State and local health department for specific requirements for your setting. Refer to the resource *Food Safety for Older Adults* (www.fda.gov/media/83744/download) for additional good practices.

REFERENCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). *People with a higher risk of food poisoning*. www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/people-at-risk-food-poisoning.html

U.S. Food and Drug Administration. (2011). *Food safety for older adults and people with cancer, Diabetes, HIV/AIDS, organ transplants, and autoimmune diseases*. www.fda.gov/media/83744/download

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